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AT PRESENT ENGLAND'S GREATNESS

IS UNPARALLELED IN THE HISTORY OF THE WORLD.



THE LATE LORD DERBY ON ENGLAND'S FUTURE.

We boast of our Wealth, our Power, our Resources, our Naval and Military Strength, and our Commercial superiority. All these may depart from us in a few years, and we may remain, like Holland, a rich and a comparatively powerless people. The nation depends upon the individuals who compose it. And no nation can be distinguished for morality, duty, adhesion to the rules of honour and justice whose citizens individually and collectively do not possess the same traits.—SMILES.

The late LORD DERBY, in one of his recent speeches:—

'An accomplished nobleman said to me the other day that he thought England had steadily declined in those qualities that make up the force and strength of national character since the days of Waterloo; and though he did not say so in words, yet from his manner and tone I inferred that he thought it was too late to hope for recovery, that the deluge was coming, and that happy are they who had almost lived their lives and would not survive to see the catastrophe. Of course it is possible that such a catastrophe may come; and, given certain conditions, it is certain it will come.'

Have we those conditions at hand? No, not until we have lost our great mineral wealth—COALS;

And Horny Hand and Busy Brain have lost, or neglected to cultivate Honour, Truth, and Justice.

What higher aim can man attain Than conquest over human pain.

TO ALL LEAVING HOME FOR A CHANGE.—Don't go without a bottle of ENO'S 'FRUIT SALT.' It prevents any over-acid state of the blood. It should be kept in every bedroom, in readiness for any emergency. Be careful to avoid any acidulated salines, and use ENO'S 'FRUIT SALT' to prevent the bile becoming too thick and (impure) producing a gummy, viscous, clammy stickiness or adhesiveness in the mucous membrane of the intestinal canal, frequently the pivot of diarrhoea and disease. ENO'S 'FRUIT SALT' prevents and removes diarrhoea in the early stages. Without such a simple precaution the jeopardy of life is immensely increased. There is no doubt that where it has been taken in the earlier stages of a disease it has in many instances prevented what would otherwise have been a severe illness.

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BE OF REAL PROFIT.**

THE SECRET OF SUCCESS.—Sterling Honesty of Purpose. Without it Life is a Sham.

CAUTION.—Examine each Bottle, and see the Capsule is marked ENO'S 'FRUIT SALT.' Without it you have been imposed on by a worthless imitation. Sold by all Chemists.

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LONGMAN'S MAGAZINE.

OCTOBER 1893.

A Gentleman of France:

BEING THE MEMOIRS OF GASTON DE BONNE,
SIEUR DE MARSAC.

BY STANLEY J. WEYMAN.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE CASTLE ON THE HILL.

THE certainty that Bruhl and his captives were not far off, and the likelihood that we might be engaged within the hour, expelled from the minds of even the most timorous among us the vapourish fears which had before haunted them. In the hurried scramble which presently landed us on the bank of the stream, men who had ridden for hours in sulky silence found their voices, and from cursing their horses' blunders soon advanced to swearing and singing after the fashion of their kind. This change, by relieving me of a great fear, left me at leisure to consider our position, and estimate more clearly than I might have done the advantages of hastening, or postponing, an attack. We numbered eleven; the enemy, to the best of my belief, twelve. Of this slight superiority I should have recked little in the daytime; nor, perhaps, counting Maignan as two, have allowed that it existed. But the result of a night attack is more difficult to forecast; and I had also to take into account the perils to which the two ladies would be exposed, between the darkness and tumult, in the event of the issue remaining for a time in doubt.

These considerations, and particularly the last, weighed so powerfully with me, that before I reached the bottom of the gorge I had decided to postpone the attack until morning. The answers to some questions which I put to the inhabitant of the house by the ford as soon as I reached level ground only confirmed me in this resolution. The road Bruhl had taken ran for some distance by the river-side, and along the bottom of the gorge, and, difficult by day, was reported to be impracticable for horses by night. The castle Bruhl had mentioned lay full two leagues away, and on the farther edge of a tract of rough woodland. Finally, I doubted whether, in the absence of any other reason for delay, I could have marched my men, weary as they were, to the place before daybreak.

When I came to announce this decision, however, and to inquire what accommodation the peasant could afford us, I found myself in trouble. Fanchette, mademoiselle's woman, suddenly confronted me, her face scarlet with rage. Thrusting herself forward into the circle of light cast by the lantern, she assailed me with a virulence and fierceness which said more for her devotion to her mistress than her respect for me. Her wild gesticulations, her threats, and the appeals which she made now to me, and now to the men who stood in a circle round us, their faces in shadow, discomfited as much as they surprised me.

'What!' she cried violently, 'you call yourself a gentleman, and lie here and let my mistress be murdered, or worse, within a league of you! Two leagues? A groat for your two leagues! I would walk them barefoot if that would shame you. And you, you call yourselves men, and suffer it! It is God's truth you are a set of cravens and sluggards. Give me as many women, and I would——'

'Peace, woman!' Maignan said in his deep voice. 'You had your way and came with us, and you will obey orders as well as another! Be off, and see to the victuals before worse happen to you!'

'Ay, see to the victuals!' she retorted. 'See to the victuals, forsooth! That is all you think of—to lie warm and eat your fill! A set of dastardly, drinking, droning guzzlers you are! You are!' she retorted, her voice rising to a shriek. 'May the plague take you!'

'Silence!' Maignan growled fiercely, 'or have a care to yourself! For a copper-piece I would send you to cool your heels in the water below—for that last word! Begone, do you hear,' he continued, seizing her by the shoulder and thrusting her towards the house, 'or worse may happen to you. We are rough customers, as you will find if you do not lock up your tongue!'

I heard her go wailing into the darkness; and Heaven knows it was not without compunction I forced myself to remain inactive in the face of a devotion which seemed so much greater than mine. The men fell away one by one to look to their horses and choose sleeping-quarters for the night; and presently M. d'Agen and I were left alone standing beside the lantern, which the man had hung on a bush before his door. The brawling of the water as it poured between the banks, a score of paces from us, and the black darkness which hid everything beyond the little ring of light in which we stood—so that for all we could see we were in a pit—had the air of isolating us from all the world.

I looked at the young man, who had not once lisped that day; and I plainly read in his attitude his disapproval of my caution. Though he declined to meet my eye, he stood with his arms folded and his head thrown back, making no attempt to disguise the scorn and ill-temper which his face expressed. Hurt by the woman's taunts, and possibly shaken in my opinion, I grew restive under his silence, and unwisely gave way to my feelings.

'You do not appear to approve of my decision, M. d'Agen?' I said.

'It is yours to command, sir,' he answered proudly.

There are truisms which have more power to annoy than the veriest reproaches. I should have borne in mind the suspense and anxiety which he was suffering, and which had so changed him that I scarcely knew him for the gay young spark on whose toe I had trodden. I should have remembered that he was young and I old, and that it behoved me to be patient. But on my side also there was anxiety, and responsibility as well; and, above all, a rankling soreness, to which I refrain from giving the name of jealousy, though it came as near to that feeling as the difference in our ages and personal advantages (whereof the balance was all on his side) would permit. This, no doubt, it was which impelled me to continue the argument.

'You would go on?' I said persistently.

'It is idle to say what I would do,' he answered with a flash of anger.

'I asked for your opinion, sir,' I rejoined stiffly.

'To what purpose?' he retorted, stroking his small moustache haughtily. 'We look at the thing from opposite points. You are going about your business, which appears to be the rescuing of ladies who are—may I venture to say it?—so unfortunate as to

entrust themselves to your charge. I, M. de Marsac, am more deeply interested. More deeply interested,' he repeated lamely. 'I—in a word, I am prepared, sir, to do what others only talk of—and if I cannot follow otherwise, would follow on my feet!'

'Whom?' I asked curtly, stung by this repetition of my own words.

He laughed harshly and bitterly. 'Why explain? or why quarrel?' he replied cynically. 'God knows, if I could afford to quarrel with you, I should have done so fifty hours ago. But I need your help; and, needing it, I am prepared to do that which must seem to a person of your calm passions and perfect judgment alike futile and incredible—pay the full price for it.'

'The full price for it!' I muttered, understanding nothing, except that I did not understand.

'Ay, the full price for it!' he repeated. And as he spoke he looked at me with an expression of rage so fierce that I recoiled a step. That seemed to restore him in some degree to himself, for without giving me an opportunity of answering he turned hastily from me, and, striding away, was in a moment lost in the darkness.

He left me amazed beyond measure. I stood repeating his phrase about 'the full price' a hundred times over, but still found it and his passion inexplicable. To cut the matter short, I could come to no other conclusion than that he desired to insult me, and, aware of my poverty and the equivocal position in which I stood towards mademoiselle, chose his words accordingly. This seemed a thing unworthy of one of whom I had before thought highly; but calmer reflection enabling me to see something of youthful bombast in the tirade he had delivered, I smiled a little sadly, and determined to think no more of the matter for the present, but to persist firmly in that which seemed to me to be the right course.

Having settled this, I was about to enter the house, when Maignan stopped me, telling me that the plague had killed five people in it, leaving only the man we had seen, who had indeed been seized, but recovered. This ghastly news had scared my company to such a degree that they had gone as far from the house as the level ground permitted, and there lighted a fire, round which they were going to pass the night. Fanchette had taken up her quarters in the stable, and the equerry announced that he had kept a shed full of sweet hay for M. d'Agen and myself. I assented to this arrangement, and after supping off soup

and black bread, which was all we could procure, bade the peasant rouse us two hours before sunrise ; and so, being too weary and old in service to remain awake thinking, I fell asleep, and slept soundly till a little after four.

My first business on rising was to see that the men before mounting made a meal, for it is ill work fighting empty. I went round also and saw that all had their arms, and that such as carried pistols had them loaded and primed. M. François did not put in an appearance until this work was done, and then showed a very pale and gloomy countenance. I took no heed of him, however, and with the first streak of daylight we started in single file and at a snail's pace up the valley, the peasant, whom I placed in Maignan's charge, going before to guide us, and M. d'Agen and I riding in the rear. By the time the sun rose and warmed our chilled and shivering frames we were over the worst of the ground, and were able to advance at some speed along a track cut through a dense forest of oak-trees.

Though we had now risen out of the valley, the close-set trunks and the undergrowth round them prevented our seeing in any direction. For a mile or more we rode on blindly, and presently started on finding ourselves on the brow of a hill, looking down into a valley, the nearer end of which was clothed in woods, while the farther widened into green sloping pastures. From the midst of these a hill or mount rose sharply up, until it ended in walls of grey stone scarce to be distinguished at that distance from the native rock on which they stood.

'See!' cried our guide. 'There is the castle!'

Bidding the men dismount in haste, that the chance of our being seen by the enemy—which was not great—might be further lessened, I began to inspect the position at leisure ; my first feeling while doing so being one of thankfulness that I had not attempted a night attack, which must inevitably have miscarried, possibly with loss to ourselves, and certainly with the result of informing the enemy of our presence. The castle, of which we had a tolerable view, was long and narrow in shape, consisting of two towers connected by walls. The nearer tower, through which lay the entrance, was roofless, and in every way seemed to be more ruinous than the inner one, which appeared to be perfect in both its stories. This defect notwithstanding, the place was so strong that my heart sank lower the longer I looked ; and a glance at Maignan's face assured me that his experience was also at fault. For M. d'Agen, I clearly saw, when I turned to him, that he had never

until this moment realised what we had to expect, but, regarding our pursuit in the light of a hunting-party, had looked to see it end in like easy fashion. His blank, surprised face, as he stood eyeing the stout grey walls, said as much as this.

'Arnidieu!' Maignan muttered, 'give me ten men, and I would hold it against a hundred!'

'Tut, man, there is more than one way to Rome!' I answered oracularly, though I was far from feeling as confident as I seemed. 'Come, let us descend and view this nut a little nearer.'

We began to trail downwards in silence, and as the path led us for a while out of sight of the castle, we were able to proceed with less caution. We had nearly reached without adventure the farther skirts of the wood, between which and the ruin lay an interval of open ground, when we came suddenly, at the edge of a little clearing, on an old hag, who was so intent upon tying up faggots that she did not see us until Maignan's hand was on her shoulder. When she did, she screamed out, and, escaping from him with an activity wonderful in a woman of her age, ran with great swiftness to the side of an old man who lay at the foot of a tree half a bowshot off, and whom we had not before seen. Snatching up an axe, she put herself in a posture of defence before him with gestures and in a manner as touching in the eyes of some among us as they were ludicrous in those of others, who cried to Maignan that he had met his match at last, with other gibes of the kind that pass current in camps.

I called to him to let her be, and went forward myself to the old man, who lay on a rude bed of leaves, and seemed unable to rise. Appealing to me with a face of agony not to hurt his wife, he bade her again and again lay down her axe; but she would not do this until I had assured her that we meant him no harm, and that my men should molest neither the one nor the other.

'We only want to know this,' I said, speaking slowly, in fear lest my language should be little more intelligible to them than their *patois* to me. 'There are a dozen horsemen in the old castle there, are there not?'

The man stilled his wife, who continued to chatter and mow at us, and answered eagerly that there were; adding, with a trembling oath, that the robbers had beaten him, robbed him of his small store of meal, and, when he would have protested, thrown him out, breaking his leg.

'Then how came you here?' I said.

'She brought me on her back,' he answered feebly.

Doubtless there were men in my train who would have done all that these others had done; but hearing the simple story told, they stamped and swore great oaths of indignation; and one, the roughest of the party, took out some black bread and gave it to the woman, whom under other circumstances he would not have hesitated to rob. Maignan, who knew all arts appertaining to war, examined the man's leg and made a kind of cradle for it, while I questioned the woman.

'They are there still?' I said. 'I saw their horses tethered under the walls.'

'Yes, God requite them!' she answered, trembling violently.

'Tell me about the castle, my good woman,' I said. 'How many roads into it are there?'

'Only one.'

'Through the nearer tower?'

She said yes, and finding that she understood me, and was less dull of intellect than her wretched appearance led me to expect, I put a series of questions to her which it would be tedious to detail. Suffice it that I learned that it was impossible to enter or leave the ruin except through the nearer tower; that a rickety temporary gate barred the entrance, and that from this tower, which was a mere shell of four walls, a narrow square-headed doorway without a door led into the court, beyond which rose the habitable tower of two stories.

'Do you know if they intend to stay there?' I asked.

'Oh, ay, they bade me bring them faggots for their fire this morning, and I should have a handful of my own meal back,' she answered bitterly; 'and fell thereon into a passion of impotent rage, shaking both her clenched hands in the direction of the castle, and screaming frenzied maledictions in her cracked and quavering voice.'

I pondered awhile over what she had said, liking very little the thought of that narrow square-headed doorway through which we must pass before we could effect anything. And the gate, too, troubled me. It might not be a strong one, but we had neither powder, nor guns, nor any siege implements, and could not pull down stone walls with our naked hands. By seizing the horses we could indeed cut off Bruhl's retreat; but he might still escape in the night; and in any case our pains would only increase the women's hardships while adding fuel to his rage. We must have some other plan.

The sun was high by this time ; the edge of the wood scarcely a hundred paces from us. By advancing a few yards through the trees I could see the horses feeding peacefully at the foot of the sunny slope, and even follow with my eyes the faint track which zigzagged up the hill to the closed gate. No one appeared—doubtless they were sleeping off the fatigue of the journey—and I drew no inspiration thence ; but as I turned to consult Maignan my eye lit on the faggots, and I saw in a flash that here was a chance of putting into practice a stratagem as old as the hills, yet ever fresh, and not seldom successful.

It was no time for over-refinement. My knaves were beginning to stray forward out of curiosity, and at any moment one of our horses, scenting those of the enemy, might neigh and give the alarm. Hastily calling M. d'Agen and Maignan to me, I laid my plan before them, and satisfied myself that it had their approval ; the fact that I had reserved a special part for the former serving to thaw the reserve which had succeeded to his outbreak of the night before. After some debate Maignan persuaded me that the old woman had not sufficient nerve to play the part I proposed for her, and named Fanchette, who, being called into council, did not belie the opinion we had formed of her courage. In a few moments our preparations were complete : I had donned the old charcoal-burner's outer rags, Fanchette had assumed those of the woman, while M. d'Agen, who was for a time at a loss, and betrayed less taste for this part of the plan than for any other, ended by putting on the jerkin and hose of the man who had served us as guide.

When all was ready I commended the troop to Maignan's discretion, charging him in the event of anything happening to us to continue the most persistent efforts for mademoiselle's release, and on no account to abandon her. Having received his promise to this effect, and being satisfied that he would keep it, we took up each of us a great faggot, which being borne on the head and shoulders served to hide the features very effectually ; and thus disguised we boldly left the shelter of the trees. Fanchette and I went first, tottering in a most natural fashion under the weight of our burdens, while M. d'Agen followed a hundred yards behind. I had given Maignan orders to make a dash for the gate the moment he saw the last-named start to run.

The perfect stillness of the valley, the clearness of the air, and the absence of any sign of life in the castle before us—which might

have been that of the Sleeping Princess, so fairylike it looked against the sky—with the suspense and excitement in our own breasts, which these peculiarities seemed to increase a hundred-fold, made the time that followed one of the strangest in my experience. It was nearly ten o'clock, and the warm sunshine flooding everything about us rendered the ascent, laden as we were, laborious in the extreme. The crisp, short turf, which had scarcely got its spring growth, was slippery and treacherous. We dared not hasten, for we knew not what eyes were upon us, and we dared as little—after we had gone halfway—lay our faggots down, lest the action should disclose too much of our features.

When we had reached a point within a hundred paces of the gate, which still remained obstinately closed, we stood to breathe ourselves, and balancing my bundle on my head, I turned to make sure that all was right behind us. I found that M. d'Agen, intent on keeping his distance, had chosen the same moment for rest, and was sitting in a very natural manner on his faggot, mopping his face with the sleeve of his jerkin. I scanned the brown leafless wood, in which we had left Maignan and our men; but I could detect no glitter among the trees nor any appearance likely to betray us. Satisfied on these points, I muttered a few words of encouragement to Fanchette, whose face was streaming with perspiration; and together we turned and addressed ourselves to our task, fatigue—for we had had no practice in carrying burdens on the head—enabling us to counterfeit the decrepitude of age almost to the life.

The same silence prevailing as we drew nearer inspired me with not a few doubts and misgivings. Even the bleat of a sheep would have been welcome in the midst of a stillness which seemed ominous. But no sheep bleated, no voice hailed us. The gate, ill hung and full of fissures, remained closed. Step by step we staggered up to it, and at length reached it. Afraid to speak lest my accent should betray me, I struck the forepart of my faggot against it and waited, doubting whether our whole stratagem had not been perceived from the beginning, and a pistol-shot might not be the retort.

Nothing of the kind happened, however. The sound of the blow, which echoed dully through the building, died away, and the old silence resumed its sway. We knocked again, but fully two minutes elapsed before a grumbling voice, as of a man aroused from sleep, was heard drawing near, and footsteps came slowly and heavily to the gate. Probably the fellow inspected us through

a loophole, for he paused a moment, and my heart sank ; but the next, seeing nothing suspicious, he unbarred the gate with a querulous oath, and, pushing it open, bade us enter and be quick about it.

I stumbled forward into the cool, dark shadow, and the woman followed me, while the man, stepping out with a yawn, stood in the entrance, stretching himself in the sunshine. The roofless tower, which smelled dank and unwholesome, was empty, or cumbered only with rubbish and heaps of stones ; but looking through the inner door I saw in the courtyard a smouldering fire and half a dozen men in the act of rousing themselves from sleep. I stood a second balancing my faggot, as if in doubt where to lay it down ; and then assuring myself by a swift glance that the man who had let us in still had his back towards us, I dropped it across the inner doorway. Fanchette, as she had been instructed, plumped hers upon it, and at the same moment I sprang to the door, and taking the man there by surprise, dealt him a violent blow between the shoulders, which sent him headlong down the slope.

A cry behind me, followed by an oath of alarm, told me that the action was observed and that now was the pinch. In a second I was back at the faggots, and drawing a pistol from under my blouse was in time to meet the rush of the nearest man, who, comprehending all, sprang up, and made for me with his sheathed sword. I shot him in the chest as he cleared the faggots—which, standing nearly as high as a man's waist, formed a tolerable obstacle—and he pitched forward at my feet.

This balked his companions, who drew back ; but unfortunately it was necessary for me to stoop to get my sword, which was hidden in the faggot I had carried. The foremost of the rascals took advantage of this. Rushing at me with a long knife, he failed to stab me—for I caught his wrist—but he succeeded in bringing me to the ground. I thought I was undone. I looked to have the others swarm over upon us ; and so it would doubtless have happened had not Fanchette, with rare courage, dealt the first who followed a lusty blow on the body with a great stick she snatched up. The man collapsed on the faggots, and this hampered the rest. The check was enough. It enabled M. d'Agen to come up, who, dashing in through the gate, shot down the first he saw before him, and, running at the doorway with his sword, with incredible fury and the courage which I had always known

him to possess, cleared it in a twinkling. The man with whom I was engaged on the ground, seeing what had happened, wrested himself free with the strength of despair, and, dashing through the outer door, narrowly escaped being ridden down by my followers as they swept up to the gate at a gallop, and dismounted amid a whirlwind of cries.

In a moment they thronged in on us pell-mell, and as soon as I could lay my hand on my sword I led them through the doorway with a cheer, hoping to be able to enter the farther tower with the enemy. But the latter had taken the alarm too early and too thoroughly. The court was empty. We were barely in time to see the last man dart up a flight of outside stairs, which led to the first story, and disappear, closing a heavy door behind him. I rushed to the foot of the steps and would have ascended also, hoping against hope to find the door unsecured; but a shot which was fired through a loophole and narrowly missed my head, and another which brought down one of my men, made me pause. Discerning all the advantage to be on Bruhl's side, since he could shoot us down from his cover, I cried a retreat; the issue of the matter leaving us masters of the entrance-tower, while they retained the inner and stronger tower, the narrow court between the two being neutral ground unsafe for either party.●

Two of their men had fled outwards and were gone, and two lay dead; while the loss on our side was confined to the man who was shot, and Fanchette, who had received a blow on the head in the *mêlée*, and was found, when we retreated, lying sick and dazed against the wall.

It surprised me much, when I came to think upon it, that I had seen nothing of Bruhl, though the skirmish had lasted two or three minutes from the first outcry, and been attended by an abundance of noise. Of Fresnoy, too, I now remembered that I had caught a glimpse only. These two facts seemed so strange that I was beginning to augur the worst, though I scarcely know why, when my spirits were marvellously raised and my fears relieved by a thing which Maignan, who was the first to notice it, pointed out to me. This was the appearance at an upper window of a white kerchief, which was waved several times towards us. The window was little more than an arrow-slit, and so narrow and high besides that it was impossible to see who gave the signal; but my experience of mademoiselle's coolness and resource left me in no doubt on the point. With high hopes and a lighter heart than I had worn for some time I bestirred myself to take

every precaution, and began by bidding Maignan select two men and ride round the hill, to make sure that the enemy had no way of retreat open to him.

CHAPTER XXIX.

PESTILENCE AND FAMINE.

WHILE Maignan was away about this business I despatched two men to catch our horses, which were running loose in the valley, and to remove those of Bruhl's party to a safe distance from the castle. I also blocked up the lower part of the door leading into the courtyard, and named four men to remain under arms beside it, that we might not be taken by surprise; an event of which I had the less fear, however, since the enemy were now reduced to eight swords, and could only escape, as we could only enter, through this doorway. I was still busied with these arrangements when M. d'Agen joined me, and I broke off to compliment him on his courage, acknowledging in particular the service he had done me personally. The heat of the conflict had melted the young man's reserve, and flushed his face with pride; but as he listened to me he gradually froze again, and when I ended he regarded me with the same cold hostility.

'I am obliged to you,' he said, bowing. 'But may I ask what next, M. de Marsac?'

'We have no choice,' I answered. 'We can only starve them out.'

'But the ladies?' he said, starting slightly. 'What of them?'

'They will suffer less than the men,' I replied. 'Trust me, the latter will not bear starving long.'

He seemed surprised, but I explained that with our small numbers we could not hope to storm the tower, and might think ourselves fortunate that we now had the enemy cooped up where he could not escape, and must eventually surrender.

'Ay, but in the meantime how will you ensure the women against violence?' he asked, with an air which showed he was far from satisfied.

'I will see to that when Maignan comes back,' I answered pretty confidently.

The equerry appeared in a moment with the assurance that

egress from the farther side of the tower was impossible. I bade him nevertheless keep a horseman moving round the hill, that we might have intelligence of any attempt. The order was scarcely given when a man—one of those I had left on guard at the door of the courtyard—came to tell me that Fresnoy desired to speak with me on behalf of M. de Bruhl.

‘Where is he?’ I asked.

‘At the inner door with a flag of truce,’ was the answer.

‘Tell him, then,’ I said, without offering to move, ‘that I will communicate with no one except his leader, M. de Bruhl. And add this, my friend,’ I continued. ‘Say it aloud: that if the ladies whom he has in charge are injured by so much as a hair, I will hang every man within these walls, from M. de Bruhl to the youngest lackey.’ And I added a solemn oath to that effect.

The man nodded, and went on his errand, while I and M. d’Agen, with Maignan, remained standing outside the gate, looking idly over the valley and the brown woods through which we had ridden in the early morning. My eyes rested chiefly on the latter, Maignan’s as it proved on the former. Doubtless we all had our own thoughts. Certainly I had, and for a while, in my satisfaction at the result of the attack and the manner in which we had Bruhl confined, I did not remark the gravity which was gradually overspreading the equerry’s countenance. When I did I took the alarm, and asked him in a moment what was the matter.

‘I don’t like that, your Excellency,’ he answered, pointing into the valley.

I looked anxiously, and looked, and saw nothing.

‘What?’ I said in astonishment.

‘The blue mist,’ he muttered, with a shiver. ‘I have been watching it this half-hour, your Excellency. It is rising fast.’

I cried out on him for a maudlin fool, and M. d’Agen swore impatiently; but for all that, and despite the contempt I strove to exhibit, I felt a sudden chill at my heart as I recognised in the valley below the same blue haze which had attended us through yesterday’s ride and left us only at nightfall. Involuntarily we both fell to watching it as it rose slowly and more slowly, first enveloping the lower woods, and then spreading itself abroad in the sunshine. It is hard to witness a bold man’s terror and remain unaffected by it; and I confess I trembled. Here, in the moment of our seeming success, was something which I had not taken into account, something against which I could not guard either myself or others!

'See!' Maignan whispered hoarsely, pointing again with his finger. 'It is the Angel of Death, your Excellency! Where he kills by ones and twos, he is invisible. But when he slays by hundreds and by thousands, men see the shadow of his wings!'

'Chut, fool!' I retorted with anger, which was secretly proportioned to the impression his weird saying made on me. 'You have been in battles! Did you ever see him there? or at a sack? A truce to this folly,' I continued. 'And do you go and inquire what food we have with us. It may be necessary to send for some.'

I watched him go doggedly off, and knowing the stout nature of the man and his devotion to his master, I had no fear that he would fail us; but there were others, almost as necessary to us, in whom I could not place the same confidence. And these had also taken the alarm. When I turned I found groups of pale-faced men, standing by twos and threes at my back, who, pointing and muttering and telling one another what Maignan had told us, looked where we had looked. As one spoke and another listened, I saw the old panic revive in their eyes. Men who an hour or two before had crossed the court under fire with the utmost resolution, and dared instant death without a thought, grew pale, and looking from this side of the valley to that with faltering eyes, seemed to be seeking, like hunted animals, a place of refuge. Fear, once aroused, hung in the air. Men talked in whispers of the abnormal heat, and, gazing at the cloudless sky, fled from the sunshine to the shadow; or, looking over the expanse of woods, longed to be under cover and away from this lofty eyrie, which to their morbid eyes seemed a target for all the shafts of death.

I was not slow to perceive the peril with which these fears and apprehensions, which rapidly became general, threatened my plans. I strove to keep the men employed, and to occupy their thoughts as far as possible with the enemy and his proceedings; but I soon found that even here a danger lurked; for Maignan, coming to me by-and-by with a grave face, told me that one of Bruhl's men had ventured out, and was parleying with the guard on our side of the court. I went at once and broke the matter off, threatening to shoot the fellow if he was not under cover before I counted ten. But the scared, sulky faces he left behind him told me that the mischief was done, and I could think of no better remedy for it than to give M. d'Agen a hint, and station him at the outer gate with his pistols ready.

The question of provisions, too, threatened to become a serious one; I dared not leave to procure them myself, nor could I trust

any of my men with the mission. In fact the besiegers were rapidly becoming the besieged. Intent on the rising haze and their own terrors, they forgot all else. Vigilance and caution were thrown to the winds. The stillness of the valley, its isolation, the distant woods that encircled us and hung quivering in the heated air, all added to the panic. Despite all my efforts and threats, the men gradually left their posts, and, getting together in little parties at the gate, worked themselves up to such a pitch of dread that by two hours after noon they were fit for any folly; and at the mere cry of 'Plague!' would have rushed to their horses and ridden in every direction.

It was plain that I could depend for useful service on myself and three others only—of whom, to his credit be it said, Simon Fleix was one. Seeing this, I was immensely relieved when I presently heard that Fresnoy was again seeking to speak with me. I was no longer, it will be believed, for standing on formalities; but glad to waive in silence the punctilio on which I had before insisted, and anxious to afford him no opportunity of marking the slackness which prevailed among my men, I hastened to meet him at the door of the courtyard, where Maignan had detained him.

I might have spared my pains, however. I had no more than saluted him and exchanged the merest preliminaries before I saw that he was in a state of panic far exceeding that of my following. His coarse face, which had never been prepossessing, was mottled and bedabbled with sweat; his bloodshot eyes, when they met mine, wore the fierce yet terrified expression of an animal caught in a trap. Though his first word was an oath, sworn for the purpose of raising his courage, the bully's bluster was gone. He spoke in a low voice, and his hands shook; and for a penny-piece I saw he would have bolted past me and taken his chance in open flight.

I judged from his first words, uttered, as I have said, with an oath, that he was aware of his state. 'M. de Marsac,' he said, whining like a cur, 'you know me to be a man of courage.'

I needed nothing after this to assure me that he meditated something of the basest; and I took care how I answered him. 'I have known you stiff enough upon occasions,' I replied dryly. 'And then, again, I have known you not so stiff, M. Fresnoy.'

'Only when you were in question,' he muttered with another oath. 'But flesh and blood cannot stand this. You could not yourself. Between him and them I am fairly worn out. Give me good terms—good terms, you understand, M. de Marsac?' he

whispered eagerly, sinking his voice still lower, 'and you shall have all you want.'

'Your lives, and liberty to go where you please,' I answered coldly. 'The two ladies to be first given up to me uninjured. Those are the terms.'

'But for me?' he said anxiously.

'For you? The same as the others,' I retorted. 'Or I will make a distinction for old acquaintance sake, M. Fresnoy; and if the ladies have aught to complain of, I will hang you first.'

He tried to bluster and hold out for a sum of money, or at least for his horse to be given up to him. But I had made up my mind to reward my followers with a present of a horse apiece; and I was besides well aware that this was only an after-thought on his part, and that he had fully decided to yield. I stood fast, therefore. The result justified my firmness, for he presently agreed to surrender on those terms.

'Ay, but M. de Bruhl?' I said, desiring to learn clearly whether he had authority to treat for all. 'What of him?'

He looked at me impatiently. 'Come and see!' he said, with an ugly sneer.

'No, no, my friend,' I answered, shaking my head warily. 'That is not according to rule. You are the surrendering party, and it is for you to trust us. Bring out the ladies, that I may have speech with them, and then I will draw off my men.'

'Nom de Dieu!' he cried hoarsely, with so much fear and rage in his face that I recoiled from him. 'That is just what I cannot do.'

'You cannot?' I rejoined with a sudden thrill of horror. 'Why not? why not, man?' And in the excitement of the moment, conceiving the idea that the worst had happened to the women, I pushed him back with so much fury that he laid his hand on his sword.

'Confound you!' he stuttered, 'stand back! It is not that, I tell you! Mademoiselle is safe and sound, and madame, if she had her senses, would be sound too. It is not our fault if she is not. But I have not got the key of the rooms. It is in Bruhl's pocket, I tell you!'

'Oh!' I made answer dryly. 'And Bruhl?'

'Hush, man!' Fresnoy replied, wiping the perspiration from his brow, and bringing his pallid, ugly face near to mine; 'he has got the plague!'

I stared at him for a moment in silence, which he was the first to break. 'Hush!' he muttered again, laying a trembling hand on my

arm ; ' if the men knew it—and not seeing him they are beginning to suspect it—they would rise on us. The devil himself could not keep them here. Between him and them I am on a razor's edge. Madame is with him, and the door is locked. Mademoiselle is in a room upstairs, and the door is locked. And he has the keys. What can I do ? What can I do, man ? ' he cried, his voice hoarse with terror and dismay.

' Get the keys,' I said instinctively.

' What ? From him ? ' he muttered, with an irrepressible shudder, which shook his bloated cheeks. ' God forbid I should see him ! It takes stout men infallibly. I should be dead by night ! By God, I should ! ' he continued, whining. ' Now you are not stout, M. de Marsac. If you will come with me I will draw off the men from that part ; and you may go in and get the key from him.'

His terror, which surpassed all feigning, and satisfied me without doubt that he was in earnest, was so intense that it could not fail to infect me. I felt my face, as I looked into his, grow to the same hue. I trembled as he did and grew sick. For if there is a word which blanches the soldier's cheek and tries his heart more than another, it is the name of the disease which travels in the hot noonday, and, tainting the strongest as he rides in his pride, leaves him in a few hours a poor mass of corruption. The stoutest and the most reckless fear it ; nor could I, more than another, boast myself indifferent to it, or think of its presence without shrinking. But the respect in which a man of birth holds himself saves him from the unreasoning fear which masters the vulgar ; and in a moment I recovered myself, and made up my mind what it behoved me to do.

' Wait awhile,' I said sternly, ' and I will come with you.'

He waited accordingly, though with manifest impatience, while I sent for M. d'Agen, and communicated to him what I was about to do. I did not think it necessary to enter into details, or to mention Bruhl's state, for some of the men were well in hearing. I observed that the young gentleman received my directions with a gloomy and dissatisfied air. But I had become by this time so used to his moods, and found myself so much mistaken in his character, that I scarcely gave the matter a second thought. I crossed the court with Fresnoy, and in a moment had mounted the outside staircase and passed through the heavy doorway.

The moment I entered, I was forced to do Fresnoy the justice of admitting that he had not come to me before he was obliged. The three men who were on guard inside tossed down their weapons

at sight of me, while a fourth, who was posted at a neighbouring window, hailed me with a cry of relief. From the moment I crossed the threshold the defence was practically at an end. I might, had I chosen or found it consistent with honour, have called in my following and secured the entrance. Without pausing, however, I passed on to the foot of a gloomy stone staircase winding up between walls of rough masonry; and here Fresnoy stood on one side and stopped. He pointed upwards with a pale face and muttered, 'The door on the left.'

Leaving him there watching me as I went upwards, I mounted slowly to the landing, and by the light of an arrow-slit which dimly lit the ruinous place found the door he had described, and tried it with my hand. It was locked, but I heard some one moan in the room, and a step crossed the floor, as if he and another came to the door and listened. I knocked, hearing my heart beat in the silence.

At last a voice quite strange to me cried, 'Who is it?'

'A friend,' I muttered, striving to dull my voice that they might not hear me below.

'A friend!' the bitter answer came. 'Go! You have made a mistake! We have no friends.'

'It is I, M. de Marsac,' I rejoined, knocking more imperatively. 'I would see M. de Bruhl. I must see him.'

The person inside, at whose identity I could now make a guess, uttered a low exclamation, and still seemed to hesitate. But on my repeating my demand I heard a rusty bolt withdrawn, and Madame de Bruhl, opening the door a few inches, showed her face in the gap. 'What do you want?' she murmured jealously.

Prepared as I was to see her, I was shocked by the change in her appearance, a change which even that imperfect light failed to hide. Her blue eyes had grown larger and harder, and there were dark marks under them. Her face, once so brilliant, was grey and pinched; her hair had lost its golden lustre. 'What do you want?' she repeated, eyeing me fiercely.

'To see him,' I answered.

'You know?' she muttered. 'You know that he—'

I nodded.

'And you still want to come in? My God! Swear you will not hurt him?'

'Heaven forbid!' I said; and on that she held the door open that I might enter. But I was not halfway across the room before she had passed me, and was again between me and the wretched

makeshift pallet. Nay, when I stood and looked down at him, as he moaned and rolled in senseless agony, with livid face and distorted features (which the cold grey light of that miserable room rendered doubly appalling), she hung over him and fenced him from me: so that looking on him and her, and remembering how he had treated her, and why he came to be in this place, I felt unmanly tears rise to my eyes. The room was still a prison, a prison with broken mortar covering the floor and loopholes for windows; but the captive was held by other chains than those of force. When she might have gone free, her woman's love, surviving all that he had done to kill it, chained her to his side with fetters which old wrongs and present danger were powerless to break.

It was impossible that I could view a scene so strange without feelings of admiration as well as pity, or without forgetting for a while, in my respect for Madame de Bruhl's devotion, the risk which had seemed so great to me on the stairs. I had come simply for a purpose of my own, and with no thought of aiding him who lay here. But so great, as I have noticed on other occasions, is the power of a noble example, that, before I knew it, I found myself wondering what I could do to help this man, and how I could relieve madame in the discharge of offices which her husband had as little right to expect at her hands as at mine. At the mere sound of the word Plague I knew she would be deserted in this wilderness by all, or nearly all; a reflection which suggested to me that I should first remove mademoiselle to a distance, and then consider what help I could afford here.

I was about to tell her the purpose with which I had come when a paroxysm more than ordinarily violent, and induced perhaps by the excitement of my presence—though he seemed beside himself—seized him, and threatened to tax her powers to the utmost. I could not look on and see her spend herself in vain; and almost before I knew what I was doing I had laid my hands on him and after a brief struggle thrust him back exhausted on the couch.

She looked at me so strangely after that that in the half-light which the loopholes afforded I tried in vain to read her meaning. 'Why did you come?' she cried at length, breathing quickly. 'You, of all men? Why did you come? He was no friend of yours, Heaven knows!'

'No, madame, nor I of his,' I answered bitterly, with a sudden revulsion of feeling.

'Then why are you here?' she retorted.

'I could not send one of my men,' I answered. 'And I want the key of the room above.'

At the mention of that—the room above—she flinched as if I had struck her, and looked as strangely at Bruhl as she had before looked at me. No doubt the reference to *Mademoiselle de la Vire* recalled to her mind her husband's wild passion for the girl, which for the moment she had forgotten. Nevertheless she did not speak, though her face turned very pale. She stooped over the couch, such as it was, and searching his clothes, presently stood up, and held out the key to me. 'Take it, and let her out,' she said with a forced smile. 'Take it up yourself, and do it. You have done so much for her it is right that you should do this.'

I took the key, thanking her with more haste than thought, and turned towards the door, intending to go straight up to the floor above and release *mademoiselle*. My hand was already on the door, which *madame*, I found, had left ajar in the excitement of my entrance, when I heard her step behind me. The next instant she touched me on the shoulder. 'You fool!' she exclaimed, her eyes flashing, 'would you kill her? Would you go from him to her, and take the plague to her? God forgive me, it was in my mind to send you. And men are such puppets you would have gone!'

I trembled with horror, as much at my stupidity as at her craft. For she was right: in another moment I should have gone, and comprehension and remorse would have come too late. As it was, in my longing at once to reproach her for her wickedness and to thank her for her timely repentance, I found no words; but I turned away in silence and went out with a full heart.

CHAPTER XXX.

STRICKEN.

OUTSIDE the door, standing in the dimness of the landing, I found *M. d'Agen*. At any other time I should have been the first to ask him why he had left the post which I had assigned to him. But at the moment I was off my balance, and his presence suggested nothing more than that here was the very person who could best execute my wishes. I held out the key to him at arm's length, and bade him release *Mademoiselle de la Vire*, who was in the room above, and escort her out of the castle.

'Do not let her linger here,' I continued urgently. 'Take her

to the place where we found the wood-cutters. You need fear no resistance.'

'But Bruhl?' he said, as he took the key mechanically from me.

'He is out of the question,' I answered in a low voice. 'We have done with him. He has the plague.'

He uttered a sharp exclamation. 'What of madame, then?' he muttered.

'She is with him,' I said.

He cried out suddenly at that, sucking in his breath, as I have known men do in pain. And but that I drew back he would have laid his hand on my sleeve. 'With him?' he stammered. 'How is that?'

'Why, man, where else should she be?' I answered, forgetting that the sight of those two together had at first surprised me also, as well as moved me. 'Or who else should be with him? He is her husband.'

He stared at me for a moment at that, and then he turned slowly away and began to go up; while I looked after him, gradually thinking out the clue to his conduct. Could it be that it was not mademoiselle attracted him, but Madame de Bruhl?

And with that hint I understood it all. I saw in a moment the conclusion to which he had come on hearing of the presence of madame in my room. In my room at night! The change had dated from that time; instead of a careless, light-spirited youth he had become in a moment a morose and restive churl, as difficult to manage as an unbroken colt. Quite clearly I saw now the meaning of the change, why he had shrunk from me, and why all intercourse between us had been so difficult and so constrained.

I laughed to think how he had deceived himself, and how nearly I had come to deceiving myself also. And what more I might have thought I do not know, for my meditations were cut short at this point by a loud outcry below, which, beginning in one or two sharp cries of alarm and warning, culminated quickly in a roar of anger and dismay.

Fancying I recognised Maignan's voice, I ran down the stairs, seeking a loophole whence I could command the scene; but finding none, and becoming more and more alarmed, I descended to the court, which I found, to my great surprise, as empty and silent as an old battle-field. Neither on the enemy's side nor on ours was a single man to be seen. With growing dismay I sprang across the court and darted through the outer tower, only to find that and the gateway equally unguarded. Nor was it until I had

passed through the latter, and stood on the brow of the slope, which we had had to clamber with so much toil, that I learned what was amiss.

Far below me a string of men, bounding and running at speed, streamed down the hill toward the horses. Some were shouting, some running silently, with their elbows at their sides and their scabbards leaping against their calves. The horses stood tethered in a ring near the edge of the wood, and by some oversight had been left unguarded. The foremost runner I made out to be Fresnoy; but a number of his men were close upon him, and then after an interval came Maignan, waving his blade and emitting frantic threats with every stride. Comprehending at once that Fresnoy and his following, rendered desperate by panic and the prospective loss of their horses, had taken advantage of my absence and given Maignan the slip, I saw I could do nothing save watch the result of the struggle.

This was not long delayed. Maignan's threats, which seemed to me mere waste of breath, were not without effect on those he followed. There is nothing which demoralises men like flight. Troopers who have stood charge after charge while victory was possible will fly like sheep, and like sheep allow themselves to be butchered, when they have once turned the back. So it was here. Many of Fresnoy's men were stout fellows, but having started to run they had no stomach for fighting. Their fears caused Maignan to appear near, while the horses seemed distant; and one after another they turned aside and made like rabbits for the wood. Only Fresnoy, who had taken care to have the start of all, kept on, and, reaching the horses, cut the rope which tethered the nearest, and vaulted nimbly on its back. Safely seated there, he tried to frighten the others into breaking loose; but not succeeding at the first attempt, and seeing Maignan, breathing vengeance, coming up with him, he started his horse, a bright bay, and rode off laughing along the edge of the wood.

Fully content with the result—for our carelessness might have cost us very dearly—I was about to turn away when I saw that Maignan had mounted and was preparing to follow. I stayed accordingly to see the end, and from my elevated position enjoyed a first-rate view of the race which ensued. Both were heavy-weights, and at first Maignan gained no ground. But when a couple of hundred yards had been covered Fresnoy had the ill-luck to blunder into some heavy ground, and this enabling his pursuer, who had time to avoid it, to get within twoscore paces of

him, the race became as exciting as I could wish. Slowly and surely Maignan, who had chosen the *Cid*, reduced the distance between them to a score of paces—to fifteen—to ten. Then Fresnoy, becoming alarmed, began to look over his shoulder and ride in earnest. He had no whip, and I saw him raise his sheathed sword and strike his beast on the flank. It sprang forward, and appeared for a few strides to be holding its own. Again he repeated the blow—but this time with a different result. While his hand was still in the air, his horse stumbled, as it seemed to me, made a desperate effort to recover itself, fell headlong and rolled over and over.

Something in the fashion of the fall, which reminded me of the mishap I had suffered on the way to Chizé, led me to look more particularly at the horse as it rose trembling to its feet, and stood with drooping head. Sure enough, a careful glance enabled me, even at that distance, to identify it as Matthew's bay—the trick-horse. Shading my eyes, and gazing on the scene with increased interest, I saw Maignan, who had dismounted, stoop over something on the ground, and again after an interval stand upright.

But Fresnoy did not rise. Nor was it without awe that, guessing what had happened to him, I remembered how he had used this very horse to befool me; how heartlessly he had abandoned Matthew, its owner; and by what marvellous haps—which men call chances—Providence had brought it to this place, and put it in his heart to choose it out of a score which stood ready to his hand!

I was right. The man's neck was broken. He was quite dead. Maignan passed the word to one, and he to another, and so it reached me on the hill. It did not fail to awaken memories both grave and wholesome. I thought of St. Jean d'Angely; of Chizé, of the house in the Ruelle d'Arcy; then in the midst of these reflections I heard voices, and turned to find mademoiselle, with M. d'Agen behind me.

Her hand was still bandaged, and her dress, which she had not changed since leaving Blois, was torn and stained with mud. Her hair was in disorder; she walked with a limp. Fatigue and apprehension had stolen the colour from her cheeks, and in a word she looked, when I turned, so wan and miserable that for a moment I feared the plague had seized her.

The instant, however, that she caught sight of me a wave of colour invaded, not her cheeks only, but her brow and neck. From her hair to the collar of her gown she was all crimson. For a

second she stood gazing at me, and then, as I saluted her, she sprang forward. Had I not stepped back she would have taken my hands.

My heart so overflowed with joy at this sight, that in the certainty her blush gave me I was fain to toy with my happiness. All jealousy of M. d'Agen was forgotten; only I thought it well not to alarm her by telling her what I knew of the Bruhls. 'Mademoiselle,' I said earnestly, bowing, but retreating from her, 'I thank God for your escape. One of your enemies lies helpless here, and another is dead yonder.'

'It is not of my enemies I am thinking,' she answered quickly, 'but of God, of whom you rightly remind me; and then of my friends.'

'Nevertheless,' I answered as quickly, 'I beg you will not stay to thank them now, but go down to the wood with M. d'Agen. He will do all that may be possible to make you comfortable.'

'And you, sir?' she said, with a charming air of confusion.

'I must stay here,' I answered, 'for a while.'

'Why?' she asked with a slight frown.

I did not know how to tell her, and I began lamely. 'Some one must stop with madame,' I said without thought.

'Madame?' she exclaimed. 'Does she require assistance? I will stop.'

'God forbid!' I cried.

I do not know how she understood the words, but her face, which had been full of softness, grew hard. She moved quickly towards me; but, mindful of the danger I carried about me, I drew farther back. 'No nearer, mademoiselle,' I murmured, 'if you please.'

She looked puzzled, and finally angry, turning away with a sarcastic bow. 'So be it, then, sir,' she said proudly, 'if you desire it. M. d'Agen, if you are not afraid of me, will you lead me down?'

I stood and watched them go down the hill, comforting myself with the reflection that to-morrow, or the next day, or within a few days at most, all would be well. Scanning her figure as she moved, I fancied she went with less spirit as the space increased between us. And I pleased myself with the thought. A few days, a few hours, I thought, and all would be well. The sunset which blazed in the west was no more than a faint reflection of the glow which for a few minutes pervaded my mind, long accustomed to cold prospects and the chill of neglect.

A term was put to these pleasant imaginings by the arrival of Maignan, who, panting from the ascent of the hill, informed me with a shamefaced air that the tale of horses was complete, but that four of our men were missing, and had doubtless gone off with the fugitives. These proved to be M. d'Agen's two lackeys and the two varlets M. de Rambouillet had lent us. There remained besides Simon Fleix only Maignan's three men from Rosny; but the state in which our affairs now stood enabled us to make light of this. I informed the equerry—who visibly paled at the news—that M. de Bruhl lay ill of the plague, and like to die; and I bade him form a camp in the wood below, and, sending for food to the house where we had slept the night before, make mademoiselle as comfortable as circumstances permitted.

He listened with surprise, and when I had done asked with concern what I intended to do myself.

'Some one must remain with Madame de Bruhl,' I answered. 'I have already been to the bedside to procure the key of mademoiselle's room, and I run no further risk. All I ask is that you will remain in the neighbourhood, and furnish us with supplies should it be necessary.'

He looked at me with emotion, which, strongly in conflict with his fears as it was, touched me not a little. 'But morbleu! M. de Marsac,' he said, 'you will take the plague and die.'

'If God wills,' I answered, very lugubriously I confess, for pale looks in one commonly so fearless could not but depress me. 'But if not, I shall escape. Any way, my friend,' I continued, 'I owe you a quittance. Simon Fleix has an inkhorn and paper. Bid him bring them to this stone and leave them, and I will write that Maignan, the equerry of the Baron de Rosny, served me to the end as a brave soldier and an honest friend. What, *mon ami*?' I continued, for I saw that he was overcome by this, which was, indeed, a happy thought of mine. 'Why not? It is true, and will acquit you with the Baron. Do it, and go. Advise M. d'Agen, and be to him what you have been to me.'

He swore two or three great oaths, such as men of his kind use to hide an excess of feeling, and after some further remonstrance went away to carry out my orders, leaving me to stand on the brow in a strange kind of solitude, and watch horses and men withdraw to the wood, until the whole valley seemed left to me and stillness and the grey evening. For a time I stood in thought. Then reminding myself, for a fillip to my spirits, that I had been far more alone when I walked the streets of St. Jean friendless and

threadbare than I was now, I turned, and, swinging my scabbard against my boots for company, stumbled through the dark, silent courtyard, and mounted as cheerfully as I could to madame's room.

To detail all that passed during the next five days would be tedious and in indifferent taste, seeing that I am writing this memoir for the perusal of men of honour; for though I consider the offices which the whole can perform for the sick to be worthy of the attention of every man, however well born, who proposes to see service, they seem to be more honourable in the doing than the telling. One episode, however, which marked those days filled me then, as it does now, with the most lively pleasure; and that was the unexpected devotion displayed by Simon Fleix, who, coming to me, refused to leave, and showed himself at this pinch to be possessed of such sterling qualities that I freely forgave him the deceit he had formerly practised on me. The fits of moody silence into which he still fell at times and an occasional irascibility seemed to show that he had not altogether conquered his insane fancy; but the mere fact that he had come to me in a situation of hazard, and voluntarily removed himself from mademoiselle's neighbourhood, gave me good hope for the future.

M. de Bruhl died early on the morning of the second day, and Simon and I buried him at noon. He was a man of courage and address, lacking only principles. In spite of madame's grief and prostration, which were as great as though she had lost the best husband in the world, we removed before night to a separate camp in the woods, and left with the utmost relief the grey ruin on the hill, in which, it seemed to me, we had lived an age. In our new bivouac, where, game being abundant, and the weather warm, we lacked no comfort, except the society of our friends, we remained four days longer. On the fifth morning we met the others of our company by appointment on the north road, and commenced the return journey.

Thankful that we had escaped contagion, we nevertheless still proposed to observe for a time such precautions in regard to the others as seemed necessary, riding in the rear and having no communication with them, though they showed by signs the pleasure they felt at seeing us. From the frequency with which mademoiselle turned and looked behind her, I judged she had overcome her pique at my strange conduct, which the others should by this time have explained to her. Content, therefore, with the present, and full of confidence in the future, I rode along in a rare

state of satisfaction, at one moment planning what I would do, and at another reviewing what I had done.

The brightness and softness of the day, and the beauty of the woods, which in some places, I remember, were bursting into leaf, contributed much to establish me in this frame of mind. The hateful mist, which had so greatly depressed us, had disappeared, leaving the face of the country visible in all the brilliance of early spring. The men who rode before us, cheered by the happy omen, laughed and talked as they rode, or tried the paces of their horses, where the trees grew sparsely; and their jests and laughter coming pleasantly to our ears as we followed, warmed even madame's sad face to a semblance of happiness.

I was riding along in this state of contentment when a feeling of fatigue, which the distance we had come did not seem to justify, led me to spur the Cid into a brisker pace. The sensation of lassitude still continued, however, and indeed grew worse, so that I wondered idly whether I had over-eaten myself at my last meal. Then the thing passed for a while from my mind, which the descent of a steep hill sufficiently occupied.

But a few minutes later, happening to turn in the saddle, I experienced a strange and sudden dizziness, so excessive as to force me to grasp the cantle, and cling to it, while trees and hills appeared to dance round me. A quick, hot pain in the side followed, almost before I recovered the power of thought; and this increased so rapidly, and was from the first so definite, that, with a dreadful apprehension already formed in my mind, I thrust my hand inside my clothes, and found that swelling which is the most sure and deadly symptom of the plague.

The horror of that moment—in which I saw all those things on the possession of which I had just been congratulating myself, pass hopelessly from me, leaving me in dreadful gloom—I will not attempt to describe in this place. Let it suffice that the world lost in a moment its joyousness, the sunshine its warmth. The greenness and beauty round me, which an instant before had filled me with pleasure, seemed on a sudden no more than a grim and cruel jest at my expense, and I an atom perishing unmarked and unnoticed. Yes, an atom, a mote; the bitterness of that feeling I well remember. Then, in no long time—being a soldier—I recovered my coolness, and, retaining the power to think, decided what it behoved me to do.

(*To be continued.*)

*English Seamen in the Sixteenth Century.*¹

LECTURE IV.

DRAKE'S VOYAGE ROUND THE WORLD.

I SUPPOSE some persons present have heard the name of Lope de Vega, the Spanish poet of Philip II.'s time. Very few of you probably know more of him than his name, and yet he ought to have some interest for us, as he was one of the many enthusiastic young Spaniards who sailed in the Great Armada. He had been disappointed in some love affair. He was an earnest Catholic. He wanted distraction, and it is needless to say that he found distraction enough in the English Channel to put his love troubles out of his mind. His adventures brought before him with some vividness the character of the nation with which his own country was then in the death-grapple, especially the character of the great English seaman to whom the Spaniards universally attributed their defeat. Lope studied the exploits of Francis Drake from his first appearance to his end, and he celebrated those exploits, as England herself has never yet thought it worth her while to do, by making him the hero of an epic poem. There are heroes and heroes. Lope de Vega's epic is called 'The Dragontea.' Drake himself is the dragon, the ancient serpent of the Apocalypse. We English have been contented to allow Drake a certain qualified praise. We admit that he was a bold, dexterous sailor, that he did his country good service at the Invasion. We allow that he was a famous navigator, and sailed round the world, which no one else had done before him. But—there is always a but—of course he was a robber and a corsair, and the only excuse for him is that he was no worse than most of his contemporaries. To Lope de Vega he was a great deal worse. He was Satan himself, the incarnation of the Genius of Evil, the archenemy of the Church of God.

¹ Four Lectures delivered at Oxford, Easter Term, 1893.

It is worth while to look more particularly at the figure of a man who appeared to the Spaniards in such terrible proportions. I, for my part, believe a time will come when we shall see better than we see now what the Reformation was and what we owe to it, and these sea-captains of Elizabeth will then form the subject of a great English national epic as grand as the 'Odyssey.'

In my own poor way meanwhile I shall try in these lectures to draw you a sketch of Drake and his doings as they appear to myself. To-day I can but give you a part of the rich and varied story, but if all goes well I hope I may be able to continue it at a future time.

I have not yet done with Sir John Hawkins. We shall hear of him again. He became the manager of Elizabeth's dockyards. He it was who turned out the ships that fought Philip's fleet in the Channel in such condition that not a hull leaked, not a spar was sprung, not a rope parted at an unseasonable moment, and this at a minimum of cost. He served himself in the squadron which he had equipped. He was one of the small group of admirals who met that Sunday afternoon in the cabin of the ark *Raleigh* and sent the fireships down to stir Medina Sidonia out of his anchorage at Calais. He was a child of the sea, and at sea he died, sinking at last into his mother's arms. But of this hereafter. I must speak now of his still more illustrious kinsman, Francis Drake.

I told you the other day generally who Drake was and where he came from; how he went to sea as a boy, found favour with his master, became early an owner of his own ship, sticking steadily to trade. You hear nothing of him in connection with the Channel pirates. It was not till he was five-and-twenty that he was tempted by Hawkins into the negro-catching business, and of this one experiment was enough. He never tried it again.

The portraits of him vary very much, as indeed it is natural that they should, for most of those which pass for Drake were not meant for Drake at all. It is the fashion in this country, and a very bad fashion, when we find a remarkable portrait with no name authoritatively attached to it, to christen it at random after some eminent man, and there it remains to perplex or mislead.

The best likeness of Drake that I know is an engraving in Sir William Stirling Maxwell's collection of sixteenth-century notabilities, representing him, as a scroll says at the foot of the plate, at the age of forty-three. The face is round, the forehead broad and full, with the short brown hair curling crisply on either side. The eyebrows are highly arched, the eyes firm, clear, and open. I cannot undertake for the colour, but I should judge they would

be dark grey, like an eagle's. The nose is short and thick, the mouth and chin hid by a heavy moustache on the upper lip, and a close-clipped beard well spread over chin and cheek. The expression is good-humoured, but absolutely inflexible, not a weak line to be seen. He was of middle height, powerfully built, perhaps too powerfully for grace, unless the quilted doublet in which the artist has dressed him exaggerates his breadth.

I have seen another portrait of him, with pretensions to authenticity, in which he appears with a slighter figure, eyes dark, full, thoughtful, and stern, a sailor's cord about his neck with a whistle attached to it, and a ring into which a thumb is carelessly thrust, the weight of the arms resting on it, as if in a characteristic attitude. Evidently this is a carefully drawn likeness of some remarkable seaman of the time. I should like to believe it to be Drake, but I can feel no certainty about it.

We left him returned home in the *Judith* from San Juan de Ulloa, a ruined man. He had never injured the Spaniards. He had gone out with his cousin merely to trade, and he had met with a hearty reception from the settlers wherever he had been. A Spanish admiral had treacherously set upon him and his kinsman, destroyed half their vessels and robbed them of all that they had. They had left a hundred of their comrades behind them, for whose fate they might fear the worst. Drake thenceforth considered Spanish property as fair game till he had made up his own losses. He waited quietly for four years till he had re-established himself, and then prepared to try fortune again in a more daring form.

The ill-luck at San Juan de Ulloa had risen from loose tongues. There had been too much talk about it. Too many parties had been concerned. The Spanish Government had notice and were prepared. Drake determined to act for himself, have no partners, and keep his own secret. He found friends to trust him with money without asking for explanations. The Plymouth sailors were eager to take their chance with him. His force was absurdly small: a sloop or brigantine of a hundred tons, which he called the *Dragon* (perhaps, like Lope de Vega, playing on his own name), and two small pinnaces. With these he left Plymouth in the fall of the summer of 1572. He had ascertained that Philip's gold and silver from the Peruvian mines was landed at Panama, carried across the Isthmus on mules' backs on the line of M. Lesseps' Canal, and reshipped at Nombre de Dios at the mouth of the Chagre river.

He told no one where he was going. He was no more communi-

cative than necessary after his return, and the results, rather than the particulars, of his adventure are all that can be certainly known. Discretion told him to keep his counsel, and he kept it.

The Drake family published an account of this voyage in the middle of the next century; but obviously mythical, in parts demonstrably false, and nowhere to be depended on. It can be made out, however, that he did go to *Nombre de Dios*, that he found his way into the town, and saw stores of bullion there which he would have liked to carry off but could not. A romantic story of a fight in the town I disbelieve, first because his numbers were so small that to try force would have been absurd, and next because if there had been really anything like a battle an alarm would have been raised in the neighbourhood, and it is evident that no alarm was given. In the woods were parties of runaway slaves, who were called *Cimarons*. It was to these that Drake addressed himself, and they volunteered to guide him where he could surprise the treasure convoy on the way from Panama. His movements were silent and rapid. One interesting incident is mentioned which is authentic. The *Cimarons* took him through the forest to the watershed from which the streams flow to both oceans. Nothing could be seen through the jungle of undergrowth; but Drake climbed a tall tree, saw from the top of it the Pacific glittering below him, and made a vow that one day he would himself sail a ship in those waters.

For the present he had immediate work on hand. His guides kept their word. They led him to the track from Panama, and he had not long to wait before the tinkling was heard of the mule bells as they were coming up the pass. There was no suspicion of danger, not the faintest. The mule train had but its ordinary guard, who fled at the first surprise. The immense booty fell all into Drake's hands—gold, jewels, silver bars—and got with much ease, as Prince Hal said at Gadshill. The silver they buried, as too heavy for transport. The gold, pearls, rubies, emeralds, and diamonds they carried down straight to their ship. The voyage home went prosperously. The spoils were shared among the adventurers, and they had no reason to complain. They were wise enough to hold their tongues, and Drake was in a condition to look about him and prepare for bigger enterprises.

Rumours got abroad, spite of reticence. Imagination was high in flight just then; rash amateurs thought they could make their fortunes in the same way, and tried it, to their sorrow. A

sort of inflation can be traced in English sailors' minds as their work expanded. Even Hawkins, the clear, practical Hawkins, was infected. The crews of Philip's men-of-war went annually in the winter in vast numbers to the Banks of Newfoundland to fish. Hawkins told Elizabeth that if she would let him take four or five ships he would go out and destroy the whole of them. But Elizabeth must order it herself. 'Decide, madam,' he wrote to her in his great round hand, 'and decide quickly. Time flies, and the wings of man's life are plumed with the feathers of death.' This was not in Drake's line. He kept to prose and fact. He studied the globe. He examined all the charts that he could get. He became known to the Privy Council and the Queen, and prepared for an enterprise which would make his name and frighten Philip in earnest.

The ships which the Spaniards used on the Pacific were usually built on the spot. But Magellan was known to have gone by the Horn, and where a Portuguese could go an Englishman could go. Drake proposed to try. There was a party in Elizabeth's council against these adventures and in favour of peace with Spain; but Elizabeth herself was always for enterprises of pith and moment. She was willing to help, and others of her council were willing too, provided their names were not to appear. The responsibility was to be Drake's own. Again, the vessels in which he was preparing to tempt fortune seem preposterously small. The *Pelican*, or *Golden Hinde*, which belonged to Drake himself, was called but 120 tons, at best no larger than a modern racing yawl, though perhaps no racing yawl ever left White's yard better found for the work which she had to do. The next, the *Elizabeth* of London, was said to be eighty tons; a small pinnace of twelve tons, in which we should hardly risk a summer cruise round the Land's End, with two sloops or frigates of fifty and thirty tons, made the rest. The *Elizabeth* was commanded by Captain Winter, a Queen's officer and perhaps a son of the old admiral.

We may credit Drake with knowing what he was about. He and his comrades were carrying their lives in their hands. If they were taken they would be inevitably hanged. Their safety depended on speed of sailing, and specially in the power of working fast to windward, which the heavy square-rigged ships could not do. The crews all told were 160 men and boys. Drake had his brother John with him. Among his officers were the chaplain, Mr. Fletcher, another minister of some kind who spoke Spanish,

and in one of the sloops a mysterious Mr. Doughty. Who Mr. Doughty was, and why he was sent out, is uncertain. When an expedition of consequence was on hand, the Spanish party in the Cabinet usually attached to it some second in command whose business was to defeat the object. When Drake went to Cadiz in after years to singe King Philip's beard, he had a colleague sent with him whom he had to lock into his cabin before he could get to his work. So far as I can make out, Mr. Doughty had a similar commission. On this occasion secrecy was impossible. It was generally known that Drake was going to the Pacific through Magellan Straits, to act afterwards on his own judgment. The Spanish ambassador, now Don Bernardino de Mendoza, in informing Philip of what was intended, advised him to send out orders for the instant sinking of every English ship, and the execution of every English sailor, that appeared on either side the Isthmus in West Indian waters. The orders were despatched, but so impossible it seemed that an English pirate could reach the Pacific, that the attention was confined to the Caribbean Sea, and not a hint of alarm was sent across to the other side.

On November 15, 1577, the *Pelican* and her consort sailed out of Plymouth Sound. The elements frowned on their start. On the second day they were caught in a winter gale. The *Pelican* sprung her main-mast, and they put back to refit and repair. But Drake defied auguries. Before the middle of December all was again in order. The weather mended, and with a fair wind and smooth water they made a fast run across the Bay of Biscay and down the coast to the Cape de Verde Islands. There taking up the north-east Trades, they struck across the Atlantic, crossed the line, and made the South American continent in latitude 33° south. They passed the mouth of the Plate River, finding to their astonishment fresh water at the ship's side in fifty-four fathoms. All seemed so far going well, when one morning Mr. Doughty's sloop was missing, and he along with her. Drake, it seemed, had already reason to distrust Doughty, and guessed the direction in which he had gone. The *Marigold* was sent in pursuit, and he was overtaken and brought back. To prevent a repetition of such a performance, Drake took the sloop's stores out of her, burnt her, distributed the crew through the other vessels, and took Mr. Doughty under his own charge. On June 20 they reached Port St. Julians on the coast of Patagonia. They had been long on the way, and the southern winter

had come round, and they had to delay further to make more particular inquiry into Doughty's desertion. An ominous and strange spectacle met their eyes as they entered the harbour. In that utterly desolate spot a skeleton was hanging on a gallows, the bones picked clean by the vultures. It was one of Magellan's crew who had been executed there for mutiny fifty years before. The same fate was to befall the unhappy Englishman who had been guilty of the same fault. Without the strictest discipline it was impossible for the enterprise to succeed, and Doughty had been guilty of worse than disobedience. We are told briefly that his conduct was found tending to contention, and threatening the success of the voyage. Part he was said to have confessed; part was proved against him—one knows not what. A court was formed out of the crew. He was tried, as near as circumstances allowed, according to English usage. He was found guilty, and was sentenced to die. He made no complaint, or none of which a record is preserved. He asked for the sacrament, which was, of course, allowed, and Drake himself communicated with him. They then kissed each other, and the unlucky wretch took leave of his comrades, laid his head on the block, and so ended. His offence can be only guessed; but the suspicious curiosity about his fate which was shown afterwards by Mendoza makes it likely that he was in Spanish pay. The ambassador cross-questioned Captain Winter very particularly about him, and we learn one remarkable fact from Mendoza's letters not mentioned by any English writer, that Drake was himself the executioner, choosing to bear the entire responsibility.

'This done,' writes an eye-witness, 'the general made divers speeches to the whole company, persuading us to unity, obedience, and regard of our voyage, and for the better confirmation thereof willed every man the Sunday following to prepare himself to receive the Communion as Christian brothers and friends ought to do, which was done in very reverend sort; and so with good contentment every man went about his business.'

You must take this last incident into your conception of Drake's character, think of it how you please.

It was now midwinter, the stormiest season of the year, and they remained for six weeks in Port St. Julian. They burnt the twelve-ton pinnacle, as too small for the work they had now before them, and there remained only the *Pelican*, the *Elizabeth*, and the *Marigold*. In cold wild weather they weighed at last, and on August 20 made the opening of Magellan's Straits.

The passage is seventy miles long, tortuous and dangerous. They had no charts. The ship's boats led, taking soundings as they advanced. Icy mountains overhung them on either side; heavy snow fell below. They brought up occasionally at an island to rest the men, and let them kill a few seals and penguins to give them fresh food. Everything they saw was new, wild, and wonderful.

Having to feel their way, they were three weeks in getting through. They had counted on reaching the Pacific that the worst of their work was over, and that they could run north at once into warmer and calmer latitudes. The peaceful ocean, when they entered it, proved the stormiest they had ever sailed on. A fierce westerly gale drove them six hundred miles to the south-east outside the Horn. It had been supposed, hitherto, that Tierra del Fuego was solid land to the South Pole, and that the Straits were the only communication between the Atlantic and the Pacific. They now learnt the true shape and character of the Western Continent. In the latitude of Cape Horn, a westerly gale blows for ever round the globe; the waves the highest anywhere known. The *Marigold* went down in the tremendous encounter. Captain Winter in the *Elizabeth* made his way back into Magellan's Straits. There he lay for three weeks, lighting fires nightly to show Drake where he was, but no Drake appeared. They had agreed, if separated, to meet on the coast in the latitude of Valparaiso; but Winter was chicken-hearted, or else traitorous like Doughty, and sore, we are told, 'against the mariners' will,' when the three weeks were out, he sailed away for England, where he reported that all the ships were lost but the *Pelican*, and that the *Pelican* was probably lost too.

Drake had believed better of Winter, and had not expected to be so deserted. He had himself taken refuge among the islands which form the Cape, waiting for the spring and milder weather. He used the time in making surveys, and observing the habits of the native Patagonians, whom he found a tough race, going naked amidst ice and snow. The days lengthened, and the sea smoothed at last. He then sailed for Valparaiso, hoping to meet Winter there, as he had arranged. At Valparaiso there was no Winter, but there was in the port instead a great galleon just come in from Peru. The galleon's crew took him for a Spaniard, hoisted their colours, and beat their drums. The *Pelican* shot alongside. The English sailors in high spirits leapt on board. A Plymouth lad who could speak Spanish knocked down the first

man he met with an 'Abajo, perro!' 'Down, you dog, down!' No life was taken; Drake never hurt man if he could help it. The crew crossed themselves, jumped overboard, and swam ashore. The prize was examined. Four hundred pounds weight of gold was found in her, besides other plunder.

The galleon being disposed of, Drake and his men pulled ashore to look at the town. The people had all fled. In the church they found a chalice, two cruets, and an altar-cloth, which were made over to the chaplain to improve his Communion furniture. A few pipes of wine and a Greek pilot who knew the way to Lima completed the booty.

'Shocking piracy,' you will perhaps say. But what Drake was doing would have been all right and good service had war been declared, and the essence of things does not alter with the form. In essence there *was* war, deadly war, between Philip and Elizabeth. Even later, when the Armada sailed, there had been no formal declaration. The reality is the important part of the matter. It was but stroke for stroke, and the English arm proved the stronger.

Still hoping to find Winter in advance of him, Drake went on next to Tarapaca, where silver from the Andes mines was shipped for Panama. At Tarapaca there was the same unconsciousness of danger. The silver bars lay piled on the quay, the muleteers who had brought them were sleeping peacefully in the sunshine at their side. The muleteers were left to their slumbers. The bars were lifted into the English boats. A train of mules or llamas came in at the moment with a second load as rich as the first. This, too, went into the *Pelican's* hold. The bullion taken at Tarapaca was worth near half a million ducats.

Still there were no news of Winter. Drake began to realise that he was now entirely alone, and had only himself and his own crew to depend on. There was nothing to do but to go through with it, danger adding to the interest. Arica was the next point visited. Half a hundred blocks of silver were picked up at Arica. After Arica came Lima, the chief depôt of all, where the grandest haul was looked for. At Lima, alas! they were just too late. Twelve great hulks lay anchored there. The sails were unbent, the men were ashore. They contained nothing but some chests of reals, and a few bales of silk and linen. But a thirteenth, called by the gods *Our Lady of the Conception*, called by men *Cacafuego*, a name incapable of translation, had sailed a few days

before for the Isthmus with the whole produce of the Lima mines for the season. Her ballast was silver, her cargo gold and emeralds and rubies.

Drake deliberately cut the cables of the ships in the roads, that they might drive ashore and be unable to follow him. The *Pelican* spread her wings, every feather of them, and sped away in pursuit. He would know the *Cacafuego*, so he learnt at Lima, by the peculiar cut of her sails. The first man who caught sight of her was promised a gold chain for his reward. A sail was seen on the second day. It was not the chase, but it was worth stopping for. Eighty pounds weight of gold was found, and a great gold crucifix, set with emeralds said to be as large as pigeon's eggs. They took the kernel. They left the shell. Still on and on. We learn from the Spanish accounts that the Viceroy of Lima, as soon as he recovered from his astonishment, despatched ships in pursuit. They came up with the last plundered vessel, heard terrible tales of the rovers' strength, and went back for a larger force. The *Pelican* meanwhile went along upon her course for eight hundred miles. At length, off Quito and close under the shore, the *Cacafuego's* peculiar sails were sighted, and the gold chain was claimed. There she was, freighted with the fruit of Aladdin's garden, going lazily along a few miles ahead. Care was needed in approaching her. If she guessed the *Pelican's* character, she would run in upon the land and they would lose her. It was afternoon. The sun was still above the horizon, and Drake meant to wait till night, when the breeze would be off the shore, as in the tropics it always is.

The *Pelican* sailed two feet to the *Cacafuego's* one. Drake filled his empty wine-skins with water and trailed them astern to stop his way. The chase supposed that she was followed by some heavy-loaded trader, and, wishing for company on a lonely voyage, she slackened sail and waited for him to come up. At length the sun went down into the ocean, the rosy light faded from off the snows of the Andes; and when both ships had become invisible from the shore, the skins were hauled in, the night wind rose, and the water began to ripple under the *Pelican's* bows. The *Cacafuego* was swiftly overtaken, and when within a cable's length a voice hailed her to put her head into the wind. The Spanish commander, not understanding so strange an order, held on his course. A broadside brought down his mainyard, and a flight of arrows rattled on his deck. He was himself wounded. In a few minutes he was a prisoner, and *Our Lady of the Conception* and

her precious freight were in the corsair's power. The wreck was cut away; the ship was cleared; a prize crew was put on board. Both vessels turned their heads to the sea. At daybreak no land was to be seen, and the examination of the prize began. The full value was never acknowledged. The invoice, if there was one, was destroyed. The accurate figures were known only to Drake and Queen Elizabeth. A published schedule acknowledged to twenty tons of silver bullion, thirteen chests of silver coins, and a hundredweight of gold, but there were gold nuggets besides in indefinite quantity, and 'a great store' of pearls, emeralds, and diamonds. The Spanish Government proved a loss of a million and a half of ducats, excluding what belonged to private persons. The total capture was immeasurably greater.

Drake, we are told, was greatly satisfied. He thought it prudent to stay in the neighbourhood no longer than necessary. He went north with all sail set, taking his prize along with him. The master, San Juan de Anton, was removed on board the *Pelican* to have his wound attended to. He remained as Drake's guest for a week, and sent in a report of what he observed to the Spanish Government. One at least of Drake's party spoke excellent Spanish. This person took San Juan over the ship. She showed signs, San Juan said, of rough service, but was still in fine condition, with ample arms, spare rope, mattocks, carpenters' tools of all descriptions. There were eighty-five men on board all told, fifty of them men of war, the rest young fellows, ship-boys and the like. Drake himself was treated with great reverence; a sentinel stood always at his cabin door. He dined alone with music.

No mystery was made of the *Pelican's* exploits. The chaplain showed San Juan the crucifix set with emeralds, and asked him if he could seriously believe that to be God. San Juan asked Drake how he meant to go home. Drake showed him a globe with three courses traced on it. There was the way that he had come, there was the way by China and the Cape of Good Hope, and there was a third way which he did not explain. San Juan asked if Spain and England were at war. Drake said he had a commission from the Queen. His captures were for her, not for himself. He added afterwards that the Viceroy of Mexico had robbed him and his kinsman, and he was making good his losses.

Then, touching the point of the sore, he said, 'I know the Viceroy will send for thee to inform himself of my proceedings.'

Tell him 'he shall do well to put no more Englishmen to

death, and to spare those he has in his hands, for if he do execute them I will hang 2,000 Spaniards and send him their heads.'

After a week's detention San Juan and his men were restored to the empty *Cacafuego*, and allowed to go. On their way back they fell in with the two cruisers sent in pursuit from Lima, reinforced by a third from Panama. They were now fully armed; they went in chase, and according to their own account came up with the *Pelican*. But, like Lope de Vega, they seemed to have been terrified at Drake as a sort of devil. They confessed that they dared not attack him, and again went back for more assistance. The Viceroy abused them as cowards, arrested the officers, despatched others again with peremptory orders to seize Drake, even if he was the devil, but by that time their questionable visitor had flown. They found nothing, perhaps to their relief.

A despatch went instantly across the Atlantic to Philip. One squadron was sent off from Cadiz to watch the Straits of Magellan and another to patrol the Caribbean Sea. It was thought that Drake's third way was no seaway at all, that he meant to leave the *Pelican* at Darien, carry his plunder over the mountains, and build a ship at Honduras to take him home. His real idea was that he might hit off the passage to the north of which Frobisher and Davis thought they had found the eastern entrance. He stood on towards California, picking up an occasional straggler in the China trade, with silk, porcelain, gold, and emeralds. Fresh water was a necessity. He put in at Guatulco for it, and his proceedings were humorously prompt. The alcaldes at Guatulco were in session trying a batch of negroes. An English boat's crew appeared in court, tied the alcaldes hand and foot, and carried them off to the *Pelican*, there to remain as hostages till the water-casks were filled.

North again he fell in with a galleon carrying out a new Governor to the Philippines. The Governor was relieved of his boxes and his jewels, and then, says one of the party, 'Our General thinking himself in respect of his private injuries received from the Spaniard, as also their contempt and indignities offered to our country and Prince, sufficiently satisfied and revenged, and supposing her Majesty would rest contented with this service, began to consider the best way home.' The first necessity was a complete overhaul of the ship. Before the days of copper sheathing weeds grew thick under water. Barnacles formed in clusters, stopping the speed, and sea-worms bored through the planking.

Twenty thousand miles lay between the *Pelican* and Plymouth Sound, and Drake was not a man to run idle chances. Still holding his north course till he had left the furthest Spanish settlement far to the south, he put into Canoa Bay in California, laid the *Pelican* ashore, set up forge and workshop, and repaired and re-rigged her with a month's labour from stem to stern. With every rope new set up and new canvas on every yard, he started again on April 16, 1579, and continued up the coast to Oregon. The air grew cold though it was summer. The men felt it from having been so long in the tropics, and dropped out of health. There was still no sign of a passage. If passage there was, Drake perceived that it must be of enormous length. Magellan's Straits, he guessed, would be watched for him, so he decided on the route by the Cape of Good Hope. In the Philippine ship he had found a chart of the Indian Archipelago. With the help of this and his own skill he hoped to find his way. He went down again to San Francisco, landed there, found the soil teeming with gold, made acquaintance with an Indian king who hated the Spaniards and wished to become an English subject. But Drake had no leisure to annex new territories. Avoiding the course from Mexico to the Philippines, he made a direct course to the Moluccas, and brought up again at the Island of Celebes. Here the *Pelican* was a second time docked and scraped. The crew had a month's rest among the fireflies and vampires of the tropical forest. Leaving Celebes, they entered on the most perilous part of the whole voyage. They wound their way among coral reefs and low islands scarcely visible above the water-line. In their chart the only outlet marked into the Indian Ocean was by the Straits of Malacca. But Drake guessed rightly that there must be some nearer opening, and felt his way looking for it along the coast of Java. Spite of all his care, he was once on the edge of destruction. One evening as night was closing in a grating sound was heard under the *Pelican's* keel. In another moment she was hard and fast on a reef. The breeze was light and the water smooth, or the world would have heard no more of Francis Drake. She lay immovable till daybreak. At dawn the position was seen not to be entirely desperate. Drake himself showed all the qualities of a great commander. Cannon were thrown over and cargo that was not needed. In the afternoon, the wind changing, the lightened vessel lifted off the rocks and was saved. The hull was uninjured, thanks to the Californian repairs. All on board had behaved well with the one exception of Mr. Fletcher, the chaplain. Mr. Fletcher,

instead of working like a man, had whined about divine retribution for the execution of Doughty.

For the moment Drake passed it over. A few days after, they passed out through the Straits of Sunda, where they met the great ocean swell, Homer's *μέγα κύμα θαλάσσης*, and they knew then that all was well.

There was now time to call Mr. Fletcher to account. It was no business of the chaplain to discourage and dispirit men in a moment of danger, and a Court was formed to sit upon him. An English captain on his own deck represents the sovereign and is head of Church as well as State. Mr. Fletcher was brought to the forecastle, where Drake, sitting on a sea-chest with a pair of *pantoufles* in his hand, excommunicated him, pronounced him cut off from the Church of God, given over to the devil for the chastising of his flesh, and left him chained by the leg to a ring-bolt to repent of his cowardice.

In the general good-humour punishment could not be of long duration. The next day the poor chaplain had his absolution and returned to his berth and his duty. The *Pelican* met with no more adventures. Sweeping in fine clear weather round the Cape of Good Hope, she touched once for water at Sierra Leone, and finally sailed in triumph into Plymouth Harbour, where she had been long given up for lost, having traced the first furrow round the globe. Winter had come home eighteen months before, but could report nothing. The news of the doings on the American coast had reached England through Madrid. The Spanish ambassador had been furious. It was known that Spanish squadrons had been sent in search. Complications would arise if Drake brought his plunder home, and timid politicians hoped that he was at the bottom of the sea. But here he was, actually arrived with a monarch's ransom in his hold.

English sympathy with an extraordinary exploit is always irresistible. Shouts of applause rang through the country, and Elizabeth, every bit of her an Englishwoman, felt with her subjects. She sent for Drake to London, made him tell his story over and over again, and was never weary of listening to him. As to injury to Spain, Philip had lighted a fresh insurrection in Ireland, which had cost her dearly in lives and money. For Philip to demand compensation of England on the score of justice was a thing to make the gods laugh.

So thought the Queen. So unfortunately did not think some members of her Council, Lord Burghley among them. Mendoza

was determined that Drake should be punished and the spoils disgorged, or else that he would force Elizabeth upon the world as the confessed protectress of piracy. Burghley thought that, as things stood, some satisfaction (or the form of it) would have to be made.

Elizabeth hated paying back as heartily as Falstaff, nor had she the least intention of throwing to the wolves a gallant Englishman, with whose achievements the world was ringing. She was obliged to allow the treasure to be registered by a responsible official, and an account rendered to Mendoza; but for all that she meant to keep her own share of the spoils. She meant, too, that Drake and his brave crew should not go unrewarded. Drake himself should have ten thousand pounds at least.

Her action was eminently characteristic of her. On the score of real justice there was no doubt at all how matters stood between herself and Philip, who had tried to dethrone and kill her.

The *Pelican* lay still at Plymouth with the bullion and jewels untouched. She directed that it should be landed and scheduled. She trusted the business to Edmund Tremayne, of Sydenham, a neighbouring magistrate, on whom she could depend. She told him not to be too inquisitive, and she allowed Drake to go back and arrange the cargo before the examination was made. Let me now read you a letter from Tremayne himself to Sir Francis Walsingham:—

‘To give you some understanding how I have proceeded with Mr. Drake: I have at no time entered into the account to know more of the value of the treasure than he made me acquainted with; and to say truth I persuaded him to impart to me no more than need, for so I saw him commanded in her Majesty’s behalf that he should reveal the certainty to no man living. I have only taken notice of so much as he *has* revealed, and the same I have seen to be weighed, registered, and packed. And to observe her Majesty’s commands for the ten thousand pounds, we agreed he should take it out of the portion that was landed secretly, and to remove the same out of the place before my son Henry and I should come to the weighing and registering of what was left; and so it was done, and no creature living by me made privy to it but himself; and myself no privier to it than as you may perceive by this.

‘I see nothing to charge Mr. Drake further than he is inclined to charge himself, and withal I must say he is inclined to advance the value to be delivered to her Majesty, and seeking in general

to recompense all men that have been in the case dealers with him. As I dare take an oath, he will rather diminish his own portion than leave any of them unsatisfied. And for his mariners and followers I have seen here as eye-witness, and have heard with my ears, such certain signs of goodwill as I cannot yet see that any of them will leave his company. The whole course of his voyage hath showed him to be of great valour; but my hap has been to see some particulars, and namely in this discharge of his company, as doth assure me that he is a man of great government, and that by the rules of God and his book, so as proceeding on such foundation his doings cannot but prosper.'

The result of it all was that deductions were made from the capture equivalent to the property which Drake and Hawkins held themselves to have been treacherously plundered of at San Juan de Ulloa, with perhaps other liberal allowances for the cost of recovery. An account of part of what remained was then given to Mendoza. It was not returned to him or to Philip, but was laid up in the Tower till the final settlement of Philip's and the Queen's claims on each other—the cost, for one thing, of the rebellion in Ireland. Commissioners met and argued and sat on ineffectually till the Armada came and the discussion ended, and the talk of restitution was over. Meanwhile, opinion varied about Drake's own doings as it has varied since. Elizabeth listened spell-bound to his adventures, sent for him to London again, and walked with him publicly about the parks and gardens. She gave him a second ten thousand pounds. The *Pelican* was sent round to Deptford; a royal banquet was held on board, Elizabeth attended and Drake was knighted. Mendoza clamoured for the treasure in the Tower to be given up to him; Walsingham wished to give it to the Prince of Orange; Leicester and his party in the Council, who had helped to fit Drake out, thought it ought to be divided among themselves, and unless Mendoza lies they offered to share it with him if he would agree to a private arrangement. Mendoza says he answered that he would give twice as much to chastise such a bandit as Drake. Elizabeth thought it should be kept as a captured pawn in the game, and so in fact it remained after the deductions which we have seen had been made.

Drake was lavish of his presents. He presented the Queen with a diamond cross and a coronet set with splendid emeralds. He gave Bromley, the Lord Chancellor, 800 dollars' worth of silver plate, and as much more to other members of the Council. The Queen wore her coronet on New Year's Day; the Chancellor was

content to decorate his sideboard at the cost of the Catholic King. Burghley and Sussex declined the splendid temptation; they said they could accept no such precious gifts from a man whose fortune had been made by plunder.

Burghley lived to see better into Drake's value. Meanwhile, what now are we, looking back over our history, to say of these things,—the Channel privateering; the seizure of Alva's army money; the sharp practice of Hawkins with the Queen of Scots and King Philip; or this amazing performance of Sir Francis Drake in a vessel no larger than a second-rate yacht of a modern noble lord?

Resolution, daring, professional skill, all historians allow to these men; but, like Burghley, they regard what they did as piracy, not much better, if at all better, than the later exploits of Morgan and Kidd. So cried the Catholics who wished Elizabeth's ruin; so cried Lope de Vega and King Philip. In milder language the modern philosopher repeats the unfavourable verdict, rejoices that he lives in an age when such doings are impossible, and apologises faintly for the excesses of an imperfect age. May I remind the philosopher that we live in an age when other things have also happily become impossible, and that if he and his friends were liable when they went abroad for their summer tours to be snapped up by the familiars of the Inquisition, whipped, burnt alive, or sent to the galleys, he would perhaps think more leniently of any measures by which that respectable institution and its masters might be induced to treat philosophers with greater consideration?

Again, remember Doctor Johnson's warning, Beware of cant. In that intensely serious century men were more occupied with the realities than the forms of things. By encouraging rebellion in England and Ireland, by burning so many scores of poor English seamen and merchants in fools' coats at Seville, the King of Spain had given Elizabeth a hundred occasions for declaring war against him. Situated as she was, with so many disaffected Catholic subjects, she could not *begin* a war on such a quarrel. She had to use such resources as she had, and of these resources the best was a splendid race of men, who were not afraid to do for her at their own risk what commissioned officers would and might have justly done had formal war been declared, men who defeated the national enemy with materials conquered from himself, who were devoted enough to dispense with the personal security which the sovereign's commission would have extended

to prisoners of war, and face the certainty of being hanged if they were taken. Yes; no doubt by the letter of the law of nations Drake and Hawkins were corsairs of the same stuff as Ulysses, as the rovers of Norway. But the common sense of Europe saw through the form to the substance which lay below it, and the instinct of their countrymen gave them a place among the fighting heroes of England, from which I do not think they will be deposed by the eventual verdict of history.

A Three-Bottle Comedy.

CHAPTER I.

EARLY one afternoon in mid-winter a very pretty and accurately attired little lady, followed by a porter who carried her furlined rug, her travelling-bag, and other paraphernalia, excited the respectful admiration of the guard in charge of the express train which was about to leave St. Pancras. He touched his cap as she advanced along the platform and said :

‘Beg pardon, ma’am—Mrs. Alston?’

Upon receiving an intimation from the little lady that that was her name, he proceeded to unlock the door of one of the compartments, remarking : ‘Reserved, by Mr. Longworth’s request, for you and the rest of the party, if you please, ma’am. Shall I get you a foot-warmer?’

‘Yes, of course,’ Mrs. Alston replied rather impatiently, ‘and will you be so good as to look out for my maid? She will be here presently; she is bringing me something that I forgot. Mind you tell her where I am as soon as she comes.’

Mrs. Alston was not much given to frowning—which, indeed, is a dangerous habit for those who are no longer quite in their first youth to contract—but her usually smooth forehead was now puckered up into anxious lines, and it was evident that she had forgotten something of importance. After she had taken her seat and had tucked herself up in her rug, she craned her neck out of window, alternately scrutinising the clock and the throng of hurrying passengers, amongst whom the missing maid was nowhere to be seen. But she had to stop frowning and assume an air of pleased surprise when an acquaintance of hers stepped briskly up to the carriage-door and took off his hat to her.

‘You of all people!’ she exclaimed. ‘Are you, by any lucky chance, going down to Newton Longworth? If you are, we shall be fellow-travellers.’

'Of course I am,' Sir Thomas Clutterbuck replied. 'Didn't you know? Mrs. Longworth said in her letter that she had told you; and, to confess the truth, I shouldn't have cared about sending a couple of horses all that distance unless she had had some rather stronger inducement to offer me than the prospect of a county ball and three or four days' hunting.'

This spruce gentleman, whose hair and moustache were quite grey, seemed indeed to have reached a time of life at which balls usually cease to be fascinating, while the risks attendant upon despatching horses by rail in chilly weather have been learnt by experience. Nevertheless, Sir Thomas Clutterbuck had retained the health and vigour besides a few other of the attributes of youth. Being a childless widower and very well off, he was naturally an interesting personage to a childless widow who was by no means as rich as she would have liked to be, and Mrs. Alston had good reasons for believing that she herself was an object of some interest to the hard-riding baronet. She, on her side, had latterly developed an extreme ardour for the chase; still, since she was an indifferent horsewoman and had lost her nerve, it may safely be assumed that she would not now have been journeying down to Leicestershire had she been as ignorant as she affected to be of the composition of the house-party which had been invited to meet her.

Nothing, however, can be more certain than that she had been left uninformed with regard to two of its members, for her countenance clouded over when she caught sight of them approaching across the platform, and it was in accents of undisguised annoyance that she ejaculated:

'Oh, bother! here comes Lord Arthur Fulton, with that horrid Naylor woman, and the guard is bringing them to our carriage. How like Adela Longworth to have asked them to travel down with us!—How do you do, dear Mrs. Naylor? Are we bound for the same destination? Yes? So glad!'

The tall, dark, beetle-browed, and rather handsome woman whom she addressed responded gruffly: 'Oh, is that you? How are you? Lord Arthur, I wish you wouldn't mind going back and catching hold of my maid for me. Tell her I want that bottle of physic that she was to call for; she'll understand.'

Lord Arthur Fulton, a stalwart young man, with a commission in the 4th Life Guards, and a foolish, good-humoured face, was only too willing to execute any orders which would remove him from the immediate neighbourhood of Mrs. Alston, whose recogni-

tion of his salute had been a curt, microscopic nod. The fact was that, only a few months previously, he had been Mrs. Alston's devoted slave, but had been unceremoniously dismissed by her on the advent of a more eligible, albeit more elderly, suitor; whereupon he had taken up in his wrath with Mrs. Naylor, who at any rate did not labour under the disadvantage of being a widow. There was a Mr. Naylor somewhere or other, but he was a person of retiring habits, whereas his loud-voiced, sporting spouse was very decidedly the reverse. Hence the virtuous Mrs. Alston disapproved of Lord Arthur, and there had been certain passages of arms between them, and it was rather a nuisance to be condemned to spend a couple of hours in a railway-carriage with her.

But if this young man had the corner of his perfidious eye upon a smoking-compartment, the half-formed design had to be abandoned, for, being rather slow in his movements, he was forestalled by the alert little baronet before he could depart on his mission.

'I'll collar your maid for you, Mrs. Naylor,' Sir Thomas said obligingly; 'I must be off after my man, who also was to meet me here with a bottle of physic which is simply indispensable.'

And off he went at a run, failing to catch, in his haste, a faint entreaty from Mrs. Alston.

'Good heavens!' exclaimed that forlorn lady inwardly, 'are we *all* a bottle to the bad? If only the other two stand as much in need of theirs as I do of mine, we are indeed a happy trio!'

She stood in terrible need of hers, poor woman; nor can words convey any idea of her relief when at the last moment, after she had almost abandoned hope and the train was about to start, Sir Thomas was thrust into the carriage by the impatient guard.

'It's all right,' the breathless emissary announced; 'I've got my stuff, thank goodness!—and I've seen your maids, and here's a bottle apiece for you two ladies.'

Each of them promptly clutched her property, and each proceeded to stow the same away in her travelling-bag with great celerity. To judge by the relaxation of their respective features, both of them felt that all was well that ended well, and both were more disposed to be amiable to their neighbours than they had been a few minutes earlier.

This, to be sure, does not mean that they were at all more disposed to be friendly to one another; but then they were only neighbours in a large and metaphorical sense of the term. Strictly speaking, young Fulton was Mrs. Naylor's neighbour, while Sir

Thomas Clutterbuck had, as a matter of course, seated himself opposite to Mrs. Alston, and between the two couples arose a barricade of rugs, wraps, and umbrellas. Sir Thomas, for his part, would have been just as well pleased if the intervening barrier had been a higher and denser one. He had conceived an immense admiration for his charming *vis-à-vis*, and, had he been spared the presence of third persons, there is no telling what he might not have been imprudent enough to say to her between London and the Midlands. As it was, he had to content himself with subdued whisperings and ardent glances.

What provoked him a little was that, although he was so close to the object of his elderly affections, she had taken such precautions against catching cold as to be almost invisible. Her sparkling blue eyes, her lovely complexion (untouched, he was prepared to swear, by any of the appliances which are too frequently made use of by women who would look far better without their aid), the really wonderful golden-brown hair, which was perhaps her crowning charm—all these were enveloped in a voluminous white gauze veil, and when he made some complaining remark upon the subject she said :

‘Oh, I know they are hideous things, and nobody wears them nowadays, but I really can’t help it. As sure as ever I venture upon a railway journey without wrapping my head up, I get such a cold that I have to go to bed for a week.’

Sir Thomas gallantly declared that he would submit to any temporary deprivation rather than be the means of bringing about such a catastrophe as that; but after a time he felt impelled to put forward a further mild remonstrance. Mrs. Alston was certainly not herself that afternoon; her customary vivacity seemed to have deserted her; more than once he suspected that she was not even listening to him; so at length he bent forward and said :

‘What is the matter? I am sure something is troubling you.’

‘Troubling me?’ she repeated; ‘oh dear no; nothing in the world! Except, of course——’ Here she jerked up one of her shoulders slightly and threw a significant glance over it in the direction of Lord Arthur, whose attentions to Mrs. Naylor were of a somewhat needlessly demonstrative order. ‘I hate that sort of thing; it’s so silly and vulgar!’ she said.

If she had told the truth (but that was quite out of the question) she would have had to own that she was much more

seriously uncomfortable than the spectacle of any flirtation, legitimate or otherwise, could have rendered her. For while Sir Thomas was gently insinuating that his life of late had been a complete blank without her, she had been furtively feeling in her bag, and had arrived at the truly appalling conviction that she had got hold of the wrong bottle. There could be no doubt about it; shape and size were alike unfamiliar, and it was as certain as anything could be that her hair-dye—that inimitable, unapproachable preparation of which she had already been bereft longer than was safe, and without having recourse to which she dared not exhibit herself in a strong light—was even now in the possession of an unscrupulous foe. She might, no doubt, boldly tell Mrs. Naylor that she believed there had been a mistake and effect the requisite exchange; but this would be a dreadfully hazardous measure.

‘She would smell a rat at once, and tear off the paper before I could stop her,’ the unhappy lady reflected. ‘No; I must get hold of that bag of hers somehow or other, if I have to kick her legs from under her, as she is leaving the carriage, to do it.’

The Fates were not cruel enough to drive Mrs. Alston to the employment of such desperate methods. When the train stopped at Northampton, Sir Thomas jumped out, and, to her great joy, he was at once followed by Mrs. Naylor, who remarked that she wanted to speak to her maid. An opportunity like that was not to be thrown away out of pique or mere reluctance to address a young man who merited snubbing. Mrs. Alston immediately bent over towards the remaining occupant of the compartment, thrust the bottle which was not hers into his hand, and said:

‘Lord Arthur, put this into Mrs. Naylor’s bag, and fish out the one which Sir Thomas was stupid enough to give her; it belongs to me.’

Now, Lord Arthur had a grudge against Mrs. Alston, and her agitation was evident. ‘Oh, well, I don’t know about opening other people’s travelling-bags,’ said he, with provoking deliberation. ‘Hadn’t we better wait until she comes back?’

‘Certainly not! It’s—it’s medicine, and she is quite sufficiently ill-bred to examine it before she hands it over. One doesn’t want everybody to know what medicine one takes. Please make haste!’

‘H’m! I’m not sure that I am justified in doing this,’ the young man observed slowly; ‘still, to oblige you, I might perhaps stretch a point. Only I shall expect my services to be recognised.’

What should you say they were worth, Mrs. Alston? A couple of dances at the ball, for instance?’

‘Oh, ten dances—twenty dances, if you like! Good gracious, here she comes! Do be quick!’

Alas! it was not in the nature of that leisurely Lifeguardsman to do things quickly. He did, indeed, just contrive to slip the bottle that Mrs. Alston had given him into Mrs. Naylor’s bag, and to withdraw the other; but there was not time—or else he pretended that there was not—to restore the latter to its owner. He popped it behind his back, as Mrs. Naylor stepped in, and immediately afterwards the train resumed its northward course. At the expiration of five minutes or so, Mrs. Alston saw him drop a newspaper over her property, and transfer both articles to his own bag. While carrying out this manœuvre, he gave her a slight, reassuring nod, by which she was but partially reassured.

‘If only I had had the sense to keep upon good terms with him!’ she reflected with tardy remorse. ‘It could have been done so easily too!’

Well, at all events, he was not a woman; so that the hair-dye was surely safer in his possession than it would have been in that of Mrs. Naylor. If he did not find an opportunity of delivering it up honourably when the travellers quitted the train—and unfortunately he did not—he would doubtless manage to do so as they descended from the omnibus which had been sent to meet them at the station.

But the luckless lady was doomed to a prolongation of suspense, for when she reached her destination those officious, over-hospitable Longworths must needs come tearing down the steps to welcome their guests. There they all were—tall, ruddy Mr. Longworth, with two huge hands outstretched, his comely middle-aged spouse, who was far too fond of alluding to the circumstance that she had been at school with Mrs. Alston, and their yellow-haired slip of a daughter Annie, and goodness only knows how many grinning children and hobbledehois in the background!

‘You’re just in time,’ Mrs. Longworth announced cheerfully. ‘We are having tea in the hall; so that you can refresh yourselves while your things are being unpacked.’

The servants, of course, had seized the handbags, and had made off with them; the only thing to be done was to practise the patience recommended by Panurge, and be thankful that tea may be partaken of without the removal of a gauze veil. Mrs. Alston pushed hers up, so as to conceal her fringe, took possession

of an armchair close to the blazing wood fire, by which the great entrance-hall was barely warmed, and kept an anxious eye upon Lord Arthur, who did not appear to think that any apology or explanation was due to her in respect of his remissness.

Some measure of consolation was, in the meantime, to be derived from watching the assiduity with which he placed himself at the orders of Annie Longworth, who was pouring out the tea. Annie was a mere child, and in the character of a rival would have been beneath contempt; but Mrs. Alston had ceased to be a competitor for Lord Arthur's affections, and it was amusing to note the displeasure of Mrs. Naylor, a jealous and exacting woman, whose flirtations were always conducted upon the crudest and most inartistic principles. It was, however, a matter of comparatively trifling consequence whether that lady was pleased or displeased. Mrs. Alston had much more important things to think about, and when Lord Arthur approached her, with a cup of tea in one hand and a plate of small cakes in the other, she took occasion to whisper to him, under cover of the loud conversation which was going on all around her:

'What have you done with my bottle? I want it at once, please.'

'Your bottle?' he returned composedly. 'By George! I forgot all about it. It's in my bag, unless my fellow has taken it out by this time. Shall I go and get it?'

'Yes; fetch it immediately. Or, rather, no; don't bring it here; it isn't a cordial to be handed round for everybody to taste. I'll tell you what you must do, if you really want me to give you those two dances that you spoke of—only I thought you had quite given up caring to dance with me. You must slip upstairs as soon as you can and join me presently in the library, bringing the bottle with you. You know the geography of the house, I suppose?'

Lord Arthur signified that he did, and in a few minutes she had the satisfaction of seeing him make his way up the broad, shallow staircase. She herself contrived to edge adroitly away from her hostess, and was soon in the library, a vast, dimly lighted chamber which, as she knew, was seldom invaded by any member of the household.

She was kept waiting a long time—so long that she had worked herself up into a fever of alarm and apprehension before at last the door was opened and the other party to the assignation advanced towards her with leisurely steps.

'Where's the bottle?' was her first question; for indeed that was the first thing to be ascertained, and the rebuke which he had earned could wait.

Instead of producing her property or replying to her query, that exasperating young man raised his forefinger and shook it at her with arch reprobation. 'Oh, Mrs. Alston,' said he, 'this is too bad of you! You shouldn't go in for that sort of thing—you shouldn't really, you know!'

'You wretch!' cried the justly incensed lady; 'how dared you examine what doesn't belong to you? No gentleman would have behaved in that way, and the very least you can do now is to keep what you have found out to yourself.'

'Oh, I'll keep it to myself,' answered Lord Arthur coolly; 'in fact, I may say that I *have* kept it to myself, and of course I shan't split. As for examining the bottle, that I couldn't help, because my man had taken it out of the paper, and there it was upon my dressing-table, as plain as a pikestaff. But I didn't think it would be right to hand the stuff over to you. You may take my word for it, Mrs. Alston, that all those expedients are a snare and a delusion.'

Mrs. Alston was too infuriated to argue with him. 'Go and get that bottle instantly!' said she. 'When I want to be favoured with your advice, I will not fail to let you know.'

He remained calm and immovable. He made some remarks, which seemed to her irrelevant, about 'Dutch courage' and the folly of imagining that anything save a clear head can enable man or woman to ride straight to hounds; but she was not concerned to dispute with him. When commands and entreaties alike failed, she had recourse to tears.

'Dear Lord Arthur,' she sobbed, 'I know I haven't treated you very well, but you can't wish to punish me so cruelly as this. Only give me my bottle, and I will do anything—anything for you that you like to ask of me!'

Lord Arthur shook his head solemnly. 'I foresaw this,' he remarked, 'and being a very soft-hearted fellow, I was afraid I should yield. So I determined to put temptation out of your way and my own. I can give you your bottle, Mrs. Alston, but I can't give you the liquor, because I've drunk every drop of it.'

'Good Lord!' gasped Mrs. Alston, sinking back into a chair, 'you never did that!'

'I did, though; and I'm bound to say that it was excellent—a little sweet, perhaps,'

'But it's deadly poison!—at least, I should think it was. What in the world did you imagine that you were drinking?'

'It—it tasted like curaçoa,' the young man answered, looking a little staggered. 'I supposed that you had taken to nipping on the sly to keep your courage up.'

'Mercy upon us!—tasted like curaçoa!' shrieked Mrs. Alston, starting to her feet. 'Why, you raving lunatic, do you know that you have swallowed a whole bottle of Wyllie's Matchless Hair-Renewer! Send for a doctor—send for a stomach-pump—take mustard and hot water, and then get somebody to hang you up by your heels! I don't want to be a constructive murderess, or an accessory before the fact, or whatever they call it. Be off this instant; you have no time to lose!'

Lord Arthur waited for no second bidding, but took to his heels, while Mrs. Alston dropped into her chair once more, and covered her face with her hands.

'Was there ever such luck as mine?' she groaned. 'Never before, since the world began, can any woman have met with a man capable of pouring her hair-dye down his throat! I suppose, if he recovers, he won't dare to tell; but what is the use of that? It's simply impossible for me to face Sir Thomas with my hair all grey at the roots and rusty half an inch higher up. Oh, I must be ill and take to my bed, and telegraph for another bottle at once; there's absolutely no alternative!'

Meanwhile Lord Arthur had rushed off to the stables to consult the stud-groom, in whose veterinary skill he had the utmost confidence, and who, he hoped, might be able to provide him with some rough-and-ready remedy, in the absence of a duly qualified medical man.

'Jenkinson,' he gasped, 'have you got such a thing as a powerful emetic that you could give me? I believe I've taken poison by mistake.'

The portly little spindle-shanked man whistled. 'Come along with me, my lord,' he answered promptly. 'I'll give you a dose that I keep for the lads when I want to give 'em a lesson they won't forget. That'll do the trick for you, you may depend. It's that searching that in about five minutes from now your lordship'll be able to feel the jints in your backbone by on'y merely pressing your 'and upon your watch chain.'

Lord Arthur was conducted into the saddle-room, whence he presently emerged, walking unsteadily and rolling his eyes, while Mr. Jenkinson returned to the stable-yard with a bland smile upon

his rubicund countenance. At the same moment Sir Thomas Clutterbuck hurried towards him from the direction of the house, and said :

‘How are you, Jenkinson?—how are you? That fool of a groom of mine has made some idiotic mistake and brought me a bottle of filthy scent, or something of that kind, instead of the red lotion that I wanted for the mare’s back. Unless I can get hold of some, I’m bound to gall her to-morrow. I dare say you know, Jenkinson, that there are horses whom the very best of riders can’t help galling, in the absence of special precautions.’

‘Certainly, Sir Thomas,’ answered the stud-groom; ‘we can let you have as much red lotion as you like.’

‘Ah, but is it the right kind? I wish you would just allow me to look at it.’

A bottle was produced for Sir Thomas’s inspection. He examined it, shook his head, and grumbled under his breath, but said he supposed it would have to do. ‘How such a stupid blunder can have been made is more than I can understand,’ he remarked. ‘My man swears he gave me the lotion all right; but I travelled down with a couple of ladies, and it so happened that I had to deliver a bottle to each of them from their respective maids. I wonder if I could possibly have misdealt!’

Jenkinson slapped his leg, and burst into a roar of laughter. ‘That’s what you’ve done, Sir Thomas, you may be sure,’ he chuckled. ‘Lord Harthur Fulton came out here, not ten minutes ago, in a pretty stew. Said he believed he’d swallowed pison by haccident, and arst me to give him an emetic—which I done. Now, I’d lay odds one o’ them ladies has been offering him a pull at your red lotion, sir, thinking ’twas her own private supply o’ cherry brandy. Dear, dear! what a most extrordinary start!’

Sir Thomas was too angry to see the joke. ‘Man alive!’ he exclaimed, ‘it isn’t possible to swallow red lotion! Why, half a mouthful of it would set him on fire! Where is he?—what have you done with him?’

Lord Arthur staggered into the yard to answer the question in person. He seated himself upon an inverted bucket, dropped his head on his hands, and moaned out feebly: ‘Jenkinson, you have more than half killed me!’

‘And serve you jolly well right, too!’ cried the irate baronet. ‘Teach you to go taking surreptitious nips out of ladies’ flasks at odd hours! Be thankful that you’re not quite killed. Meanwhile, I’ll trouble you for the remainder of my red lotion!’

'Your what?' asked the other, lifting a pallid face. 'It wasn't red lotion, it was hair—at least, I don't know what it was. Anyhow, I drained it to the dregs.'

'The devil you did!' ejaculated Sir Thomas, aghast. 'This only shows what the young men of the present day have brought themselves to by their perpetual swilling. Drained a bottle of red lotion to the dregs, and never imagined that there was anything amiss until it was all down! Why, what an inside you must have!'

'I have no inside,' Lord Arthur replied, in a lamentable voice; 'Jenkinson has deprived me of every vestige of it. I'm not at all sure that I shouldn't have done better to take my chance with the red lotion—if it was red lotion.'

'Oh *you're* all right, my lord,' said Jenkinson, reassuringly. 'A bit squeamish you must expect to feel just at first, but you'll have a fine appetite for dinner, you'll find.'

Sir Thomas was perplexed, and began to ask questions; but he obtained no intelligible answers, the young man feeling that, whatever the truth might be, his first duty was to shield Mrs. Alston. After a time, therefore, they went their several ways, Sir Thomas remarking, by way of moral: 'Well, this will be a lesson to me not to meddle with women's perfumery again, and I hope it will be a lesson to you to be a little more careful about your liquor in future.'

Lord Arthur made no audible response, but, like Galileo, he reserved the last word for himself. 'I believe it *was* curaçoa all the same!' he muttered.

CHAPTER II.

SIR THOMAS CLUTTERBUCK ascended pensively to his bedroom to get ready for dinner, for there were circumstances connected with this imbroglio which seemed to him to demand elucidation. Could it be that Mrs. Alston was in the habit of carrying cherry brandy about with her when she visited her friends? If so—but he was confident that it was not so.

'Oh no, it must be *'tother* woman,' he assured himself, 'and the scent—which ought to be taken to her, by the way—is hers.'

But the bottle which stood upon Sir Thomas's dressing-table, and upon which he had as yet bestowed only a hasty glance, did

not contain scent. He picked it up now, and the label upon its surface told him in unequivocal terms what it did contain. This discovery gave him what Lord Arthur would have called 'a nasty jar.' He whistled and walked away towards the fire, shaking his head ruefully, and murmuring: 'I couldn't have believed it of her! I've often enough heard people say that the colour was unnatural, but I set that down to envy and jealousy. Ah, well! there's an end of my little romance, and it's lucky for me that I've found her out in time. Because, mind you,' added Sir Thomas, addressing space impressively, 'a woman who will deceive you in one way will deceive you in another.'

At Sir Thomas's time of life the dissipation of a fond illusion is more apt to excite wrath than despair, and when he remembered the many occasions upon which Mrs. Alston had complacently suffered him to tell her how greatly he admired her wonderful hair, the desire to pay her out grew strong within him. 'She deserves to be publicly exposed,' he said to himself; 'but I suppose it would be almost too cruel to take the bottle downstairs and hand it to her before them all.'

Then, on a sudden, a brilliant idea occurred to him. 'By Jove, I will!' he exclaimed aloud. 'The others won't like to make any remark, even if they understand; but *she'll* understand fast enough, and I flatter myself that she won't enjoy her dinner this evening.'

Mrs. Alston did not at all expect to enjoy her dinner, inasmuch as she had made up her mind to partake of that meal, or some poor substitute for it, in her own room. Already she had telegraphed to London for a further supply of the incomparable dye, and had sent a message to Mrs. Longworth to the effect that an excruciating attack of neuralgia would prevent her from seeing anybody that night or hunting on the morrow. But what went near to making her ill in good earnest was a dreadful piece of news which reached her from Lord Arthur Fulton, in answer to the inquiries which common humanity had prompted her to make as to his condition.

'I am yet alive, thank you,' ran the note delivered to her by her maid, 'notwithstanding the desperate remedies which I have had to employ. The provoking part of it is that I am now almost sure there was no occasion for them. What I drank must have been Mrs. Naylor's curaçoa; Mrs. Naylor, I expect, has been awarded a bottle of veterinary lotion, belonging to Sir Thomas Clutterbuck; and Sir Thomas has got your hair-dye. I am

awfully sorry ; but I am sure you will see that I have nothing to reproach myself with, as I only carried out your instructions to the best of my ability—and made myself disastrously sick into the bargain.'

When Mrs. Alston had perused this terrible missive, she thought for a moment of dropping down dead ; but reflecting that her demise would distress nobody in particular, while it would be productive of doubtful benefit to herself, she determined upon less heroic measures.

'Pinfold,' said she to her maid, 'you can pack up again. We shall return to London to-morrow.'

There was, indeed, nothing else to be done. Sir Thomas, she knew, was old-fashioned in his ideas, abhorred artificiality, and would never forgive an innocent deception which had been practised upon him, in common with the rest of the world. The feelings of a gentleman would, she trusted, prevent him from divulging her secret ; but she had no wish to face his reproaches or listen to his renunciation. The game, so far as Sir Thomas Clutterbuck was concerned, was up, and it only remained to draw fresh coverts.

Thus it was that Sir Thomas failed to bring about a dramatic situation which he had designed with much forethought and self-sacrifice. He was purposely the last to enter the drawing-room before dinner, but the swift glances which he threw to right and left of him made him aware that Mrs. Alston was not among the twenty or thirty persons there assembled. It was *Hamlet* with the title-rôle omitted, and he was soon to learn that his own part in the play had been undertaken to no purpose.

Upon the rest of the company the effect produced by his appearance was, to be sure, all that could have been desired, and even a little more. A sudden pause in the conversation, followed by a general gasp, greeted the entrance of this dapper little gentleman, whose face exhibited the lines that belonged to his years, while his hair, eyebrows, and moustache had the golden beauty of early youth.

'Has he gone mad ?' whispered the awestruck Mrs. Longworth to her neighbour. 'Why, he was as grey as a badger two hours ago !'

But Sir Thomas, having been prepared to create a sensation, advanced imperturbably to his hostess, who, recovering her self-possession with an effort, proceeded to tell him how very sorry she was that poor Mrs. Alston was suffering agonies from neuralgia.

'She sent some time ago to say that she wouldn't be able to appear this evening, and now I have just had a second message, asking for a carriage to take her to the station to meet the twelve o'clock train to-morrow. She declares that she must be at home when these fits of neuralgia seize her, and that they always last a week.'

Sir Thomas's jaw fell. 'But you won't let her go!' he expostulated. 'Don't—don't let her go until she has seen me!'

Mrs. Longworth was a kind-hearted woman. She surveyed her eager suppliant with good-natured compassion, and then, bending forward, 'Do you know, Sir Thomas,' she answered, in a low voice, 'I think it would be better for her *not* to see you—as you are at present. Much better not!'

Sir Thomas fell back, with unspoken maledictions. The eyes of his fellow-guests were fixed upon him, and their countenances expressed neither admiration nor respect. In the background, Lord Arthur Fulton, the only person present who possessed the key to the enigma, was doubled up with convulsions of merriment.

'Oh, it's all very fine for you to laugh, you young jackanapes!' muttered Sir Thomas vindictively; 'but, thank God! I'm not the only one who has made a fool of himself. It will take you all your time to stick to your saddle to-morrow, I suspect.'

Lord Arthur, it was true, was feeling rather queer and rather feeble; but he was young, he had a vigorous constitution, and, as Jenkinson had foretold would be the case, he was already able to look forward to his dinner with pleasurable anticipation. As a matter of fact, he did enjoy his dinner very much indeed, and one reason for his doing so was that nearly the whole length of the table separated him from the fascinating Mrs. Naylor. He was a simple, innocent creature; he had still a great deal to learn; but he was assimilating knowledge by slow degrees (which is much the best way of growing wise), and he began to perceive that neither the Mrs. Naylor nor the Mrs. Alstons of this world are worth a tenth part of the agitation which they manage to stir up. It was perhaps a little ridiculous of him to be shocked because one lady dyed her hair, while another was given to indulging in private sips of curaçoa; still, if he had not been shocked, he might easily have become even more ridiculous; so that he had at least as good cause for self-congratulation as the rejuvenated Sir Thomas, who had quite superfluously converted himself into an object of ridicule.

Miss Longworth, who, as it happened, had been placed on

Lord Arthur's left hand, put an abrupt and somewhat embarrassing question to her neighbour presently. 'Why did you laugh at the poor old fellow in that undisguised way?' she asked. 'He saw you, and he didn't like it.'

'I'm sorry if he saw me,' the young man replied; 'but I really couldn't help myself. Isn't it enough to make anybody laugh?'

'I don't think so; I think it is painful and disgusting. What could have made him do such a thing? However, I am thankful, for his sake, that Mrs. Alston hasn't come down, and that she is leaving to-morrow.'

'Well, yes. But it would have been rather a joke if Mrs. Alston *had* come down, and I'm not sure that the laugh would have been upon her side then.'

'Lord Arthur,' said the girl, making a half-turn, so as to face the speaker, 'I believe some horrid practical joke has been played, and I believe you are at the bottom of it. What does it all mean?'

Lord Arthur pulled himself together. He could not possibly tell her what it meant; but he saw that she was displeased at the idea of his having played practical jokes upon her parents' guests, and he was unwilling to displease her. Therefore he felt entitled to exonerate himself by answering:

'I give you my word of honour that I am guiltless. I do know something, but I mustn't explain, and I dare say you will hear the truth some day. Indeed, you are almost sure to hear it; for Sir Thomas is too infuriated to hold his tongue. For the present, it would be very kind of you if you wouldn't mind talking about anything else.'

The readiness with which she accepted his word and started a different subject won his heart. So, at any rate, he subsequently averred, adding, by way of explanation, that it showed Annie Longworth's vast superiority to the rest of her sex. Lord Arthur Fulton, it may be mentioned, has now increased in wisdom to such a remarkable extent that he knows what women are. At least, he is fond of declaring solemnly that he does, and there is no denying that he has enjoyed opportunities of acquiring the knowledge to which he lays claim. Possibly, however, he might have failed to appreciate Miss Longworth at her true value, had she not been an extremely pretty, fresh and natural girl, or had she not chosen the pursuit of the fox as the topic most likely to interest him.

As it was, she was so completely successful in interesting him

that he neither did his duty to the elderly lady whom he had taken in to dinner, nor noticed that Mrs. Naylor was scowling menacingly at him across an intervening space of glass and silver and exotics. The discreditable fact is that he had temporarily forgotten Mrs. Naylor's very existence.

He was reminded of it when he entered the drawing-room with the other men, after spending a merry twenty minutes over coffee and cigarettes, during which Sir Thomas had not been spared by Mr. Longworth and other old friends. Sir Thomas had behaved very well; he had submitted to chaff good-humouredly enough, and had declared that it was no fault of his if his tradesmen were such idiots as to supply him with hair-dye instead of hair-wash. Only, on leaving the room, he had whispered, 'Now, look here, Fulton; if you don't tell on me, I won't tell on you. Is that a bargain? And, I say—is there any known means of getting the confounded stuff off?'

Lord Arthur was still chuckling over the memory of this pathetic appeal when he was sobered by an imperative gesture on Mrs. Naylor's part. He obeyed the summons with a sinking heart; for he was a good deal afraid of Mrs. Naylor, and it was forcibly borne in upon him that there was going to be trouble.

'May I ask,' the irate lady began, with ominous calmness, 'why you were so pressing in your entreaties to me to come down here with you?'

'Well, I thought you would enjoy a day with these hounds,' he answered deprecatingly, 'and—and it's a jolly house to stay in, you know. And then there will be the ball.'

'Oh!—because those were not the reasons that you gave at the time. I dare say I may enjoy a day with the hounds, if we get a run, but I can't say that I am much impressed with the jollity of the company, so far, and as for the ball—well, I really didn't come here for the pleasure of seeing you dance a dozen times with that stick of a girl.'

'She isn't very likely to give me a dozen dances,' Lord Arthur returned; 'and I don't know what you mean by a stick.'

Mrs. Naylor looked as if she would like very well to tell him one of the meanings of the word 'stick,' and even to show him one of the purposes to which that implement may be applied; but she only remarked: 'I don't admire your taste. For the matter of that, I never did admire it very much, and I certainly never admired the outrageous colour of Mrs. Alston's hair. I presume you are now convinced that I didn't traduce her when I told you

that she dyed it. Sir Thomas Clutterbuck is convinced, at all events, though he was an old goose to imagine that his little *coup de théâtre* had a chance of coming off. Of course she wasn't going to show from the moment she realised that those three bottles had gone wrong.'

'Oh, you know, then?'

'I know there is a bottle of embrocation, or some other nasty-smelling stuff, in my room, to which he is very welcome as soon as he likes to send for it. Perhaps he will then restore me my own bottle of physic, which seems to have gone astray through his stupidity.'

'Hadn't you better apply to Mrs. Alston? Your property ought to be in her hands, ought it not?'

'I suppose so; but I don't particularly care about holding any communication with her. She is a nasty, ill-natured little cat, and she would be only too glad of some excuse for spreading false reports about me. I was thinking you might send her a message to say that the bottle was yours, and that you would thank her to give it up.'

'Oh, but then she might spread ill-natured reports about me, you see. That is, if the contents of your bottle are such as to give an air of probability to ill-natured reports.'

'Nonsense! who cares what reports are spread about a man? Now, mind; I ask this of you as a favour, and I think, after the way in which you have behaved since you have been here, the least you can do is to oblige me in such a trifle.'

'And suppose I decline?'

'If you do,' answered Mrs. Naylor, making a mistake which, in view of certain previous passages between her and her interlocutor, was not wholly without excuse, 'you may be very sure that I shall never ask another favour of you—or grant you one either.'

She did not, to be sure, know that he had first appropriated her liquor and then deprived himself of it by methods of which the memory still rankled in his mind; still less could she have believed that the discovery of so venial a weakness on her part as a liking for curaçoa had inspired him with a holy horror of her. She was, therefore, completely taken aback when he jumped to his feet with alacrity, saying:

'So be it, then! I'm sorry to appear disobliging, but really I have enough sins of my own upon my conscience, without under-

taking to bear the burden of other people's. I'm afraid I must decline to interfere, whatever the consequences may be.'

With that, he hastily withdrew, and Mrs. Naylor had the mortification of observing that he made straight for Annie Longworth. Perhaps she was not far wrong when she muttered despairingly, 'Horrid young humbug!—he only wanted a pretext.' And without doubt she was right in concluding that she would merely be throwing away valuable time by devoting any further ingenuity to the enslavement of Lord Arthur Fulton.

Sir Thomas sent the remainder of Mrs. Alston's incomparable hair-dye to her that evening, with a note upon the composition of which he expended much labour, and which would have been more telling if it had not been quite so tremendously sarcastic. He himself received his red lotion from Mrs. Naylor, unaccompanied by any note or message, and thus he learnt, with a certain unholy joy, that young Fulton had reduced his weight and diminished his staying powers quite needlessly. Thus, also, he was enabled to distinguish himself in the hunting-field without fear of calamitous results to the mare, and to forget for the time being the alteration in his appearance which was dreadfully conspicuous by daylight.

Mrs. Naylor, on the other hand, did not distinguish herself that day. Whether owing to the lack of her accustomed modicum of stimulant, or to the absence of any special motive for showing what she could do, certain it is that she allowed herself to be 'stopped' at a brook by Miss Longworth, who rode with far less skill and judgment, but who had the courage of youth and ignorance; and shortly after that public humiliation she disappeared from view. Possibly, being a shrewd woman, she may have realised that there are contests in which it is useless to struggle against youth. Ignorance, too, is not without its advantages.

Now, Mrs. Naylor might, had she considered it worth her while to be malicious, have enlightened Annie Longworth's ignorance with respect to Lord Arthur's career and its episodes; but, upon the whole, it seemed equally easy and more sensible to rest satisfied with the discomfiture of Mrs. Alston and accept her own less conspicuous defeat philosophically. Returning early to Newton Longworth, she sought an interview with her hostess, and stated, with much apparent regret, that she had just received a telegram which would necessitate her departure before the ball.

'Oh, *must* you go?' exclaimed good-natured Mrs. Longworth,

in honest distress. 'This is really becoming a *saute qui peut*! First Mrs. Alston, and now you! I suppose the next thing I shall hear will be that Sir Thomas Clutterbuck has decided to desert us.'

'I shouldn't be surprised,' said Mrs. Naylor dryly.

And, indeed, before the day was over Sir Thomas justified anticipation by following suit. He came in half-an-hour before dinner, smothered in mud and quietly triumphant, having demonstrated to his juniors that he could still ride as straight as any man of half his age; but he was not eager to compete with the young people in a field where grey hair is heavily handicapped, and where hair which has been obviously robbed of that respectable hue places its owner under a double disadvantage. He wished, moreover, to get up to London as soon as he could, and consult experts, with a view to the recovery of his normal aspect.

So of the four travellers who had journeyed down to Newton Longworth together, only one remained in the house thirty-six hours after their arrival; and if he did not consider himself an uncommonly lucky fellow, that was only because no one ever does appreciate unmerited luck. To have been set free at a blow from the entanglements of two formidable ladies—for both Mrs. Alston and Mrs. Naylor were very formidable, and he was no match for either of them—might in truth have prompted him to return thanks to his guardian angel; but he was, for the moment, too much overcome with admiration for Annie Longworth's pluck—not to speak of her other attractions—to have any room left in his mind for reflection upon the perils which he had escaped. This was the third brush that she had won that season, she told him, and he obtained leave to have it mounted for her.

It was some months after these events that Lord Arthur, turning out of his club in Pall Mall, ran against Sir Thomas Clutterbuck, who said:

'So you're to be congratulated, I hear. Well, she's a nice girl, and if a man must needs marry, I don't know that he could do better than choose a girl of that sort. For my own part, I've come to the conclusion that the less one has to do with women the more likely one is to enjoy life. It's possible to get along quite comfortably without 'em, I can assure you. Been consulting any more amateur vets lately?'

Lord Arthur made a retrospective grimace. 'I haven't had occasion to do so, I'm thankful to say,' he replied. 'Have you been making any more experiments in the hair-restoring line?'

'My dear fellow, you wouldn't believe what a job I had to get rid of that infernal stuff! The end of it was that I was obliged to have my head shaved and go off on a sea-voyage for three weeks. However, I'm my own master now, anyhow, which is more than can be said for you. I think, Fulton, we may as well draw a decent veil over the episodes of our visit to your future wife's family. It makes a good story, I admit, but one isn't justified in telling tales about ladies, you know.'

'I suppose not,' answered the other, guiltily conscious of having already told his future wife all about it. 'Good-bye!'

W. E. NORRIS.

October Month.

TWO thousand five hundred feet up on the north shoulder of Ben Hope in Sutherlandshire, the Kyles of Tongue just below us, with the outer sea lashed into foam, the fine craggy peaks of Ben Loyal to the east, and an October gale blowing hard in our faces, with autumn's first suggestion of sleet and snow.

'We' are represented by two motionless forms spread out as flat as flounders on broken masses of shale and shingle, for a fine ptarmigan, with summer's golden brown plumage just changing into wintry white, has run out from under a rocky ledge, and is now croaking just in front of us, while he eyes our cowering forms with manifest objections and outstretched neck. Three hundred yards in front of him again lies a fair eight-point stag, alone and suspicious, on an open mound. The telescope from afar has already given him 'brow, bay, and tray,' but a poor head at the top.

Yet he is prime venison, if we may judge by the rare sleekness of his coat and the exquisite comfort of his pose.

The stag watches the bird as one who looks across at an old neighbour, but he flicks his ears sharply and uneasily, with the voiceless question thus rendered in action: 'Old friend, old friend, whatever is making you grunt and croak like that on the quiet mountain-side this morning?'

'Give her time,' mutters Ross, to whom nearly everything is interjectionally feminine, as he eyes the deer and the bird in one comprehensive and comprehending squint; 'just give her time. Yonder ptarmigan will get oot of our way cannily yet.'

And truly enough the bird takes a hurried run to a small burn course some thirty yards away, and, with a final protesting croak, gives a flap of her wing and sweeps strongly down hill, so that we see her no more.

But, alas! the stag, though he may not define the cause of his neighbour's uneasiness, is no longer happy. He jumps up sud-

denly and trots hastily away on to yet higher ground, where he stands at gaze on an open wind-swept hill-face that offers no shelter whatever for our approaches.

After a while he lies down again in a dip, sheltered from the wind, unlike poor us who are in the full sweep of the gale, and in no mood to echo Swinburne's longings of

‘Hurrah for the glad hard weather,
The quiver and beat of the sea!’

The deer now sits well up, a fine dark-red animal, motionless except for those alert questions of his ears, but as much on the alert as Catlin's typical Red Indian in alien territory.

‘It's hopeless to get in upon him there,’ I groan, with my glass scanning all avenues of attack.

‘Deed ay, sir, but I'll go back to the ghillie, and if we may no come nearer oursels, we'll e'en get Jimmy to work round and give him the wind; it'll shift him wha'tiver, and we'll be here to see if he runs in a bittie upon us. There's just two passes here that he must choose between; and it's nae a far shot to either if we can crawl in a bit further on him.’

Ross slips quietly backwards and is gone for half an hour. When he returns Jimmy is well on his way to the other side of Ben Hope, and we wait with what patience we may for new developments, munching our ham and grouse sandwich the while. It is a long hour before the great change in our small hillside drama is brought about. Till then his red-brown lordship of the corrie has lain quiet, but for his questioning ears. In that hour one notices everything, the dying heather, the dead-brown bracken far below in the valley, the sinuous silver of the river's course, now lost to sight at a sudden bend, now flashing out again more brightly where the pent-up waters pour over the grey rocks downward into the salmon pool that is fringed by birch and rowan trees. Ever and anon the mist forms come hurrying by, blotting out the granite boulders as if by magic one moment, unveiling the whole grand view the next. How still the forest seems with no bleat of sheep, nothing but the melancholy sighing of the autumn wind!

And then in an instant the stag is on his feet, as on the far skyline there rises slow the figure of a man. It is Jimmy at last. The stag being nearer is below his line of sight, and has only winded him, so stands ‘scenting the tainted gale,’ motionless as if turned to stone, while, in his rear, Ross and I creep quickly forward,

only to throw ourselves down again behind a rock, as he half turns in our direction, and then, manifestly uneasy, comes on at a canter straight for us. The canter drops into a trot, and in fifty yards he again turns towards the uncertain and hidden danger that is borne by the friendly wind; most wistful and pathetic are his movements, as once more he stands at gaze.

Our sheltering rock is at the point where the two passes divide, and we practically command the position. As he stands, the rifle is slipped clean out of its covering, and the safety-bolts are pushed back from the hammers.

Jimmy waves his cap, and the stag, now catching sight of him, abandons indecision and gallops full speed straight for our ambush. As I glance down the well-worn barrels at the poor beast now not sixty yards away, the gleam of the metal catches his eyes, and he jumps madly sideways up the hill, whereat my first shot is the cleanest of misses, but the second, aimed with an agony of attention, lands home in flesh and blood behind the shoulder, and the eight-pointer, after one furious effort, slips lifeless amid the granite boulders.

Ah! but now that the chase is over, and the red stag lies still and quiet, I could wish almost that he still lived, alert and agile, to prove my aim untrue.

E. L. P.

A Song of Sunlight.

LIFE and death, and the power of love, and the strength of laughter;

Music of battle, and ships that sail away to the West;
All that hath gone before and all that followeth after;
The mad, blind struggle for gold, and the restless seeking for rest,—

The brain reels round with them all, and weariness is their name:
Come to the long low moorland and hear, ere the winter win it,—
Where the broom like a sunlit beacon flashes in golden flame,—
The music of wind and water, of the bee and the mountain linnet.

Blue is the sky overhead and purple the heather about us,
Far on the dim horizon the white sails gleam in the haze,
One is the dream within and the song that is ours without us,
The joy of the sunsteeped present, struck free from the whirl of the days.

Hark! how she sings in the fern, a passionless song of content,
The wren, now hanging a moment where the fox-glove's bells are shaken,

Now by the water's edge the iris bowed as she went,
Weaving her melody out of the sweets by the way she has taken.

Sing, little bird in the willows, low by the edge of the river,
A song that ripples and leaps as the waters leap in a spring;
The wind breathes low in the grass where the threads of the gossamer quiver,

And all the sunlit moorland is silent to hear you sing.
Sing that life is glad, and fair are the land and the sea,
The wonder of stars in the night, and the noontide's golden glory,

Ours is the joy of the present, we care not what is to be,
And the past is dim as a dream, or a half-remembered story.

DUNCAN J. ROBERTSON.

*Dr. Chesterfield's Letters to his Son
on Medicine as a Career.*

BY SIR WILLIAM B. DALBY.

LETTER I.

THE PHYSICIAN.

MY DEAR SON,—Now that your student days are coming to an end, you will soon have to make up your mind as to what branch of the medical profession you will follow, and this decision will have so important a bearing upon your future that I propose to devote my next five or six letters to this subject. It will require careful consideration, for when you have at length made your selection and have started on the main line, pray do not forget that you must not leave it, or you will never do any good. Looking back to the early life of those who have been failures, I find that many of them have got on to a side line and been shunted, whilst the crowd of competitors has passed on.

I will now endeavour to lay before you not only the advantages and drawbacks of the various departments, or the direction which your work is to take, but, what is of more direct importance, the qualities of mind and character which are the requisites to success in each.

You will see, as I proceed to unfold and display my little sketches, how easily you may mistake your vocation by starting in some branch for which you are absolutely unsuited. Of your qualifications for each I must leave you to judge for yourself after I have given you a sort of ordnance map for your guidance. I really do not think that it is possible to exaggerate by any description the marvellous diversities which may exist amongst those who go by the name of doctors with the public. How great are the possibilities may be imagined by reflecting for a moment that men like Ovum and Magnet are evolved out of a medical

student, no less than the doctor who dispenses a black draught from beneath the illumination of a red lamp in a bye-street off Tottenham Court Road or in the East-end of London. It would also be difficult to imagine any lives more useful than those which these two distinguished men have led, or more interesting personalities than they present; at the same time but few would be found, I presume, to aspire to the life of the slave of the lamp, however good a creature he might be. Remember, then, what a choice of careers is before you. You cannot expect to become an Ovum or a Magnet, as they are exceptional men who appear perhaps once in a century; but if your abilities are fairly good you may get into their class, so long as you are content for a few years to 'scorn delights and live laborious days.'

By the way, my dear boy, being so much engaged as I am, and living away from you so much as I am obliged to do, I am not able to estimate very well what your abilities are equal to; but I do know that they are up to the average: so, practically, you can do anything you wish if you care to work enough, and so long as you select a department in your profession for which you are adapted. Speaking broadly, you will have to choose which you are to be—a physician, a surgeon, a specialist, or a general practitioner. Naturally you will be influenced in your choice by either ambition to attain the highest position with its accompanying honours, or by the pecuniary advantages which accrue to each. You may take it for granted without any reservation that the honours are for the most part monopolised by the physicians and surgeons. Whenever this has not been the case, it has been in instances of either 'services rendered' or under very exceptional conditions. As to the pecuniary advantages, it is an amiable fiction to suppose that the most distinguished of your profession are indifferent to them, and this piece of affectation is drummed into your ears at the introductory addresses of the hospitals; but how fictitious is this sentiment will readily appear to you if you happen to be in the company of several of your calling at a time when 'all hearts are opened and all desires known;' I mean after the consumption of an excellent dinner with its accompanying good wine. Then you will find that the most severely dieting (to his patient) physician will do you uncommonly well* (to use a phrase of the day), and that at the festive board which bristles with eminent medical talent, the guests eat and drink as if gout and dyspepsia were phantoms of the imagination. I say that on such occasions (and they are, my dear boy, most enjoyable) you

will hear the respective professional incomes of some absent colleague discussed with an absorbing interest that will dispel for ever the amiable delusion you may perhaps up till then have cherished. You will also notice that such discussions only take place in regard to a very select few, and for the best of all reasons, that a very large income only falls to the lot of an exclusively limited number at any given time. You may take it as pretty near the mark when I say that at the same time in London there are not more than four or five general physicians, and perhaps half a dozen surgeons, who make more than five or six thousand a year, and you may also be quite certain that each and all most thoroughly deserve it.

The length of art and the shortness of life was never better illustrated than in the career of a successful physician or surgeon who forms one of the possible dozen I have named. For the first ten years after a man becomes a physician the public never hear of him or see him, and his time is mostly taken up by his appointments at his hospital, where he is daily adding to his knowledge of disease. Then some of those whom as students he has taught, and who have come to trust and believe in him, occasionally call him into consultation; then some papers at the best of the medical societies show his profession of what he is made, and after fifteen years of work he begins to obtain some private practice. By the time he is forty he waits for his chances of a run on him—a run which never takes place until the disappearance of one of the leading few. Of physicians in London it may be said they are like horses in a race: three are placed, the rest nowhere. But a time arrives when one of the three is removed by death or retires at an advanced age, and it becomes necessary to fill his place. Who is the coming man? Who will succeed—? This is an inquiry which each doctor asks his fellow, and some two or three of the rising lights are spoken of. The answer is without doubt decided by the influential general practitioners who have large practices in the West-end of London and the provinces, and it must be confessed that they invariably make a wise selection. Indeed, with the knowledge at their command they could not well go wrong. To fill the position no doubt requires many qualities. It is not enough that the candidate for favour be an able physician; there are many such. He must be a man that in cases of difficulty can be relied upon, not only in serious or what are termed 'obscure cases' (the meaning of which is that the precise nature of the malady is not found out till after death), but a man whose

diplomacy, straightforwardness, wisdom, and knowledge of men will guide him so truly that the best is done for the patient, for the doctor in attendance, for the friends of the patient, for the public, for the medical profession, and I find myself almost adding for the Queen and country. May you, my dear son, be one of the selected if you adopt the rôle of the physician! You will then be a tower of strength in times of difficulty and danger. I fancy I hear you saying as you read this, What an appalling array of qualities are required for this position! Now I do not wish you to suppose that these qualities are ever all centred in one man, but some of them are sufficiently pronounced to influence the choice of the electorate. It is quite possible for any one to have noticed at some period during his life two very notable examples of what I am endeavouring to explain to you. Thus at one and the same time, so far as the fashionable portion of the London public and the newspaper-reading community in the country are concerned, there may flourish only two London physicians, and these may form a very marked contrast to each other. Both of them will be quite amongst the best that are known in regard to the knowledge of their profession, but may at first sight appear so different that one is led to wonder how they both can be so serviceable and so distinguished. The one is in no sense remarkable except that he is a sound physician, absolutely straightforward and reliable, and, beyond that he apparently has no little weaknesses, nothing more. But the other is something very much more. You cannot be in his presence without at once seeing that he is a very remarkable person—indeed, the sort of man that would have been distinguished in whatever profession he had figured. What an excellent archbishop he would have made, or indeed a general! He would have made an admirable lord chancellor, but on second thoughts his proper place would have been diplomacy. I remember one of the most brilliant diplomats of the day telling me one day that he had once been very ill and in the lowest spirits, but that when this physician came into the room, walked to his bedside and put his hand on him, he said to himself, ‘Ah! here comes the man that God Almighty has created to make me well.’ This will give you an idea of the personality of this physician. And yet, my dear friend, so complex is the character of man, so paradoxical in some of his mental attitudes as they appear to the observer, that this man raised the art of sententiousness almost to a science, and there were occasions when he left the impression that he was a consummate actor. When you are older and have

some experience of the world, you will not be surprised at unexpected aspects in men of great ability, and you will be sufficiently large-minded to make every excuse for little weaknesses in really clever people. It is the small-minded folk who love to dwell on these weak points in great men, and who forget or minimise the powerful side of their character. I beseech you in forming an estimate of men never to fall into this error, or you will at once become, in the estimation of those whose opinion is worth having, second-rate. What does it matter if a poet who writes exquisite verse is personally rather dirty? There are plenty of clean men, but a real genius is very rare.

Adieu!

LETTER II.

THE PHYSICIAN—(*continued*).

MY DEAR BOY,—In my last letter you will have obtained a broad outline of the necessary qualifications which a leading physician in London must possess. I mean over and above that complete knowledge of his profession which is, of course, so absolutely indispensable that I leave it out of the question. To fill up this outline at all adequately would indeed require so long a letter that I shall not attempt it, lest you might be confused in the narrative, and I should become tedious. Even if I endeavoured to complete the picture, when you compared it with the reality it is quite possible that you would not recognise the likeness, or even that you might be struck with the contrast to the reality; for, as I explained to you, the position may be held by two, each of whom, although excellent in his way, superficially at least presents few points in common.

You will also, perhaps, put this question to yourself, Why in the world has this man been such a success? or you may know a dozen others of brilliant attainments, of even superior accomplishments, but who have been passed over, and why is this? You will reflect, Why do the dozen fail and the two succeed? My dear boy, you will not be the first by a good many who has asked himself this question, and it is a very difficult one to answer. I once heard a physician (who was one of the three) say that the only thing wanted was earnestness, and one of the ablest judges on the Bench has often declared to me that to be a great

success in any profession nothing is wanted with fair abilities beyond the two letters G O.

If there is in a man a something which, though not easy to describe, brings success, there is, you may be sure, no less a something which with others prevents it. To put it briefly, they do not possess the art of satisfying their clients, whether it be the doctor who calls them in or the patient who seeks their aid. It was once said of a late friend of mine, who held an important military appointment, and whose duty it was to receive applicants for favour and those who sought redress for grievances, he could refuse a favour so pleasantly that the applicant was almost as satisfied as if he had granted it. He was an eminently satisfactory official, for he pleased all comers alike. A successful physician must possess the art of satisfying his patients. If he cannot leave them comfortable in their bodies, he must leave them happy in their minds; they must have a clear idea of what is the matter with them; if they do not exactly know what is the nature of their disease, they must think they do, and they must be left under the impression that the very best that is possible is being done for them; they must look forward with anxiety and pleasure to seeing him again; and they must feel comfortable in their relations with their medical attendant. Ah, I hear you say as you read this, 'It is a manner.' Stuff and nonsense! it is as often as not an absence of manner. Every man has a manner of his own; it is part of himself: but this is not an assumed manner put on for the occasion; it is a natural manner which gives confidence; it is the unconscious manner of the man who knows what he is about; it is the manner which conveys the impression (and a true one) that he is taking infinite pains to find out the precise condition of his patient, and the something very definite indeed to do him good. One man will talk impressively, and another will say only a very few words, but they will be very much to the point, and all the while one man is as good as the other and a little better. Each is an artist in his own way. If you cannot acquire this indispensable art, you will fail as a physician, and, my dear boy, you will have plenty of companions and ample leisure to discover the reasons why your fellow failures have broken down in the race. By the way, before I forget it, are you fond of children? If you are not you will never understand their little ways, and be able to manage them, or examine them, or be of the least use to them. They will hate the sight of you, and their mothers will loathe you. (It is no use to pretend to be fond of

them if you are not; they will find you out in a moment.) So, considering that children are as often ill as grown-up people, you had better at once give up all thoughts of being a doctor in any department, and become an analytical chemist or a physiologist, for if you don't like children you probably don't care for animals. At any rate, for heaven's sake don't be a doctor, for you will be a complete failure.

If you still persist after this advice, you will be like a gardener I remember, who had an antipathy to flowers and a passive toleration for vegetables and fruit. I think he ended by drinking himself to death in despair of getting employment. Here then is one very potential element against success as a physician. Some men are very intolerant of stupid and tiresome people, but the physician must be prepared to listen to a tale of woe (and very often an exceedingly long tale, too) from whatever source proceeding, and however unimportant its details, without betraying a symptom of impatience. He must give the same apparent attention to a long-winded old woman, with little or nothing the matter with her beyond eating too much and taking no exercise, that he would do to a patient who had some terrible disease that might terminate his life at any moment. Then you may say, 'He must be an actor,' and at once I reply, 'Yes,' if it means in the sense that he must give his attention when he is paid for it; and, observe this, not infrequently his patience is rewarded, for his advice is followed and his patient gets well. It is utterly unjust to call him an actor, and so to imply dishonesty. To my mind he is far more honest than the doctor who won't take the trouble to attend, but who will take his fee without having earned it by his attention. There are some physicians of such a retiring and modest demeanour that they shuffle into a room, and, after seeing their patient, give such a hesitating opinion that nobody can make head or tail of it, and then shuffle out of the house; yet with all this they may know their work well, have worked like slaves at their hospitals, and perhaps be great authorities on pathology. They are men of science and not men of the world. Now a successful physician must be a man of the world, and unconsciously he must adapt himself to the people he is dealing with. He should in a certain sense understand men as well as he does disease, and you will find that the successful man generally does. The best of us, however, sometimes makes a mistake; and I once took a friend of mine—a nice, little, modest, unassuming man—to see one of the most sagacious of physicians. After examining

him very carefully, and finding that a rather alarming symptom was dependent on nothing serious, and being, I suppose, in a more than usually oracular mood, he dismissed him with an epigram and some sententious remarks about the vegetarian diet of King Nebuchadnezzar. Now it so happened that my little friend was a remarkably clever man, and on coming away from the house he observed to me that he was disappointed with the doctor. 'He took me for a fool,' he said, 'and I don't think much of a man who makes that mistake.' It was unlucky, for as a rule few people could take the measure of men better than our oracular friend.

Think over this letter and the last one, my dear boy. Then take a stroll through the streets around Cavendish Square, and you will not be surprised to read on the brass plates the names of many physicians whom the public has never heard of and probably never will hear of.

Adieu!

LETTER III.

THE SURGEON.

MY DEAR SON,—I saw — yesterday, who left you, he tells me, last week, and I gather from what he says that the effect of my last two letters to you on the province of the physician has been to decide you not to adopt that branch of your profession. You say the reason which has influenced you in coming to this determination is that you do not consider yourself provided with the several qualities which are necessary to insure your success. I dare say you are right, and I am quite sure I was right not to minimise them in any way, but to lay the whole case clearly before you. What do you say to general surgery? or, rather, What will you think when you have heard what I have to say about it?

If you have any idea of this, the sooner you pass the examination for the Fellowship of the College of Surgeons the better, for no hospital appointment of any sort will be open to you till this is done. It is the most severe and at the same time the most fair and satisfactory of any non-competitive examination in the country. No one can pass it without a very complete knowledge of anatomy, and as good a knowledge of surgery as can be acquired considering the age of the candidates.

In short, although I myself have, in addition to this, passed a great many examinations at the University, I consider the Fellowship of the College of Surgeons by far and away the best degree worth having. Without saying any more as to your hospital work, I will assume, for the sake of argument, that you have creditably filled all the minor offices at the hospital, and are on the surgical staff. I know you can use your hands pretty well, as you draw accurately and are such a good carpenter. I am so glad you took to that when you were a boy; it will be a real help to you. So now you will only want practice to operate well, and you will get plenty of that at St. Barnabas. By the bye, it is a good thing I sent you there instead of to any other hospital, for there are many more things besides manual dexterity and a knowledge of disease that are wanted to get you into the first flight of surgeons. Now St. Barnabas is the home of oratory. I suppose Magnet's influence for so many years has brought this about. He certainly is a beautiful speaker and a charming writer: probably the most felicitous speaker on a great occasion that we have in London, and to give an address he is quite undefeated. I recollect hearing him deliver an oration which lasted exactly one hour, and it was the best thing I ever heard. It left the impression that it was absolutely spontaneous (which of course it was not, for it must have been written with infinite care after being thought out for months, and then committed to memory). It was written in pure, good, classical English, such as has not been beaten since the time of Addison. You know I am a voracious reader of English of all sorts, and exceedingly fond of hearing the best speakers, so you may take my opinion on this matter as not being in any sense exaggerated. 'But why all this talk about oratory?' you may say; 'I am not going to be an orator; deeds, not words, will occupy my life.' I beg your pardon, my dear boy; your deeds will have to be supplemented by words, or rather you will require to use a good many words before your deeds are in request by the public. You will have to teach the students by word of mouth, to give lectures on many subjects. Remember this, those whom you teach and address, and to whom you lecture, will make or mar your reputation, and very properly so. You will also read papers at the various medical societies, and you will have to speak there constantly, to maintain your views, and take part in the discussions; so there will be a good deal of talking, and talking, too, before an audience that knows all about the subject, and that is terribly critical. An audience, moreover, that will

very plainly let you know if you display any ignorance, or fall into any errors in your facts or conclusions. So you must learn to speak with ease, in well-chosen language, upon any subject which you understand thoroughly. In acquiring this useful accomplishment—and you will have constant opportunities of doing this—I beg of you not to fall into the fatal habit of speaking for the sake of speaking, unless you have something useful to contribute to the discussion. I have known many young men, and old ones too, commit this mistake, and so be regarded as bores, and not given the credit when they really did know something about what they were talking; others I have seen whom I have known to be very fair surgeons in practice, but who, when they got on their legs, hummed, and hahed, and hesitated, and floundered along till they were certainly not understandable, and barely articulate. They would have disgraced not only the Union at Cambridge, but a debating society at Eton.

There is, I think, no fear of you making such an exhibition of yourself as this at any society, or even a hospital dinner, at which latter friendly gathering I have witnessed an apparently intelligent man spend ten minutes in explaining how difficult he found it to say a few appropriate words that ought to occupy about five minutes—at St. Barnabas, however, the members of the staff take an especial pride in being able to speak well. As I said before, they follow the lead of Magnet. His clinical lectures were models of excellency, and the language in which he expresses his opinions to the friends of a patient at a consultation might almost (but this is, of course, impossible) have been carefully prepared, such well-chosen expressions does he employ. So cultivate the art of speaking before all sorts of audiences until you can speak with ease to yourself, and without affectation or tricks of manner and gesture. Learn to express your opinion in appropriate language. You must also acquire the art of writing with facility. This you can only do by constant practice. You must be a great reader of the best English authors. You will find this most necessary, for no man can write well who has not read much. A well-read man adopts quite unconsciously to himself a good style, and at once detects and corrects imperfections on reading his manuscript over before it goes to press.

I have read a good many charmingly written articles and books on surgical matters, but I have also for my sins waded through some others that have positively made me shudder. For lumbering, blundering sentences; for hideous grammatical errors;

for long paragraphs whose construction makes one almost giddy; for the jumbling together of a number of Latinised words and a complete absence of pure English, commend me to the effusions of an illiterate surgeon.

Until, then, you can write decently, if only for the sake of your anxious father, let nothing induce you to go into print, for the reading of your literary efforts might seriously affect my health and spirits, and this, I am sure, would be a real grief to you. But, seriously, what I am telling you on the subjects of speaking and writing is very true, and you will find out by-and-by what an important influence these matters have upon your career. If you are a good surgeon to start with, you may almost talk and write yourself into either fame or oblivion.

It is the common belief that a surgeon must possess what is spoken of as an extraordinary good nerve, and you may perhaps doubt if you possess this. At the same time, you must bear in mind that in the case of a surgeon the coolness and calmness which is so admirable and necessary in an operation does not imply the possession of any remarkable personal quality, but it is the simple result of a complete knowledge of what he is doing. It is rather the natural outcome of his accurate familiarity with anatomy, and his daily habit. A trooper would require a very fine nerve to go to a masthead, or a sailor to ride an unmanageable horse across a country, but a sailor's confidence aloft is due more to a matter of habit than to any particular amount of courage. In saying this I do not wish to depreciate the calmness of the surgeon in the face of difficulties, but I may tell you quite plainly that if you haven't enough courage to be a surgeon I should be very much ashamed of you, and you would turn out to be a very poor creature whatever occupation you might follow. Still this fact remains; and you may perhaps be interested to hear that I, who have known many good surgeons, have never seen one who has not possessed a very fine courage. In short, a very good surgeon is, in my humble opinion, a very fine fellow, and when I see (as I do see) the extraordinary achievements of modern surgery, I am very proud of belonging to a profession which has made life so much more endurable and prolonged to the human race. So, possibly, the great fascination which surgery no doubt possesses to many appeals more strongly to men of courage and determination than to those persons of more weakly constituted minds, or to those who are less vertebrate altogether.

You now, I hope, know something more than you did of what

is wanted to make a great surgeon; and if you ever hear it said of one that he owes his success to social influence or to the help of influential people, you may rely upon it (whoever says it) that it is utter rubbish. No man can possibly become great as a surgeon except from having thoroughly deserved it, and a good many deserve it who only partially succeed. You may perhaps some day have the opportunity of observing that a prince or some other illustrious personage, when he is on an operating-table, is uncommonly like a peasant, and, thank God! they both get the same excellent surgery in this our beloved country. Adieu!

(To be continued.)

A Winter at Davos.

‘CAIRO for the winter. Indispensable, my dear sir,’ said one doctor—I beg his pardon—medical man.

‘Much too dusty,’ said another. ‘You may take it from me as a fact that South California is the only place for you.’

Who shall decide, &c.? Arbitration seemed the only way out of it, and the names of three eminent physicians were submitted to us, in any of whom we might place implicit confidence. One we rejected forthwith, as we knew he had a ‘fad’ for Davos, and we had no intention of going in search of cold. Quite enough of that at home. As another was in Scotland we were spared the agonising doubt which always attends on selection, and with visions of palm trees and coral reefs dancing before our eyes we gaily sought counsel of our remaining oracle. The interview was long, sundry tunes were played with divers hammers on our lungs, heart, liver, and other organs; we were called on to count till we seemed in danger of brain fever, and the history of ourselves and our ancestors so far as we could recall it was recorded at length. The verdict was sharp, short, and decisive: ‘Davos, St. Moritz, or Maloia. Mind you sleep with your window open, and don’t come back till May.’ In vain we pleaded constitutional inability to stand cold, in vain we hinted at mythical friends in the Riviera, for whose health our presence was essential. The oracle remained firm, and we shook the dust off our feet and departed sorrowing but resigned. Maloia, we soon found, after a brief and uneventful career as a health resort had thrown up the sponge. It remained, therefore, to decide between the other two. We had no material whatever to go on. We had no notion as to the geographical position of either beyond a vague belief that they were both in the Engadine, and a still vaguer notion as to what or where the Engadine is. ‘Heads, St. Moritz,’ ‘Tails, Davos,’ was the only solution that presented itself to us, when in the nick of time we encountered some relatives who had wintered at the latter two

years previously. Their glowing description (even deducting the customary sixty-five per cent. for travellers' tales) quite decided us—'Davos it is, Captain.'

A nightmare journey through the dullest part of France; wild memories of a hurried meal somewhere; of a nasal voice snorting '*à voiture*' in our distracted ear; of being ejected from our uneasy couch at 2 A.M. on arrival at the Swiss frontier (this not in the official programme—a temporary precaution by reason of cholera); a dishevelled breakfast at Basle; a crawl along 'the margin of fair Zurich's wa-a-a-ters Lur-li-e-tee' (chorus very faint), and then we are turned out at apparently the end of the world, just five-and-twenty hours on the road, and yet five more to endure. Here we enter the mountain train, take a tender farewell of civilisation, and creep up and up like ants amidst a succession of glorious views which only have the effect of finally knocking our wearied brains out of time, until the shades of evening find us landed at our destination.

A long narrow valley, 5,000 feet above the sea, sheltered from most of the winds of heaven by peaks and mountains of divers elevations, pine-clad to within a short distance of their summits, with houses and chalets dotted on its surface, a valley the beauty of which with its bold outlines would make the fortune of any English county, but which somehow in Switzerland looks what Artemus Ward used to call 'ornary.' The Alpine standard of beauty is so high that a spot like this is only too apt to be contemptuously overlooked.

The first thing that strikes the stranger in Davos, and strikes him unpleasantly, is the bells. Mr. Henry Irving must certainly have resided here when he was maturing his masterly study of Mathias. His conception of the part—the storm-tossed, fury-driven wretch, maddened by that everlasting 'jangling,' is, as we have always thought, and as we now know by bitter experience, infinitely truer to life than Coquelin's rendering—the 'smug cit' who only seems to feel a half-comic sort of tickling in his ear. If Mathias were here, two days would finish him. Not only does every cow, goat, and sheep wear his bell, but when they are all shut up for the winter, and we hope for a little rest, then comes the infernal, eternal din from every cart, carriage, sleigh, omnibus, and every other kind of vehicle which ply for hire or otherwise. No doubt they become a necessity on the silent highways as winter progresses, but that does not render them one bit more palatable.

Our early climatic experiences were decidedly unfavourable;

sleet, rain, heavy snow, and very little sun characterised the latter half of October, but November made full and ample amends. We had often heard of the glories and beauties of a cold, still, dry climate, but we never believed the reports, and certainly never thought that we should be called on to experience them. And here we were not only experiencing but actually revelling in them! A reference to our diary shows a continual succession of such epithets as 'Beautiful,' 'Perfect,' 'Heavenly,' and 'Cloudless;' and when the day bore this last description you bet it was cloudless; not the sickly sort of blue we may expect in England, but a real rightdown Italian sky, against which the snow peaks stood out in grand relief. December followed suit, and it was not till January was well advanced that we really began to get what may be termed our normal allowance of snow. But to return to November, that month which most of us would like to see entirely blotted out of the calendar. Our orders were to live out of doors morning, noon, and night, take no medicine, simply trust to the marvellous pure dry air to starve out the malingering microbe—and we carried out these instructions implicitly. Skating as yet was not, and there was nothing to tempt us from the aimless constitutionals which were ordained as our daily task; but these were quite made up for by the exalting feeling that while our nearest and dearest were shivering and shrivelling at home, we were reclining on balconies in easy chairs simply roasting for hour after hour in the most genial of suns. From that time on the weather behaved in the most gentlemanly fashion—no jumping up and down, but a steady decline and fall of the thermometer, so as to gradually acclimatise us till the old year was out. 'And then,' as Mr. Arthur Cecil says in 'The Magistrate,' 'the fun began.' New Year's Day found everything in our bedrooms, even unto the humble toothbrush, frozen like the proverbial brick, and for nearly three weeks zero, and something more, was the order of our nights, our maximum being 48 degrees of frost. This intense cold, though not appreciated by the sound, was a godsend to many, if not to most of the invalids, as it penetrated into our interiors and dried us up like chips. It was only bearable by reason of the utter absence of wind, which is the most remarkable phenomenon of Davos. Not that it cannot blow if it chooses (and when it does, 'odds blinks, and blizzards,' as Mr. Acres would say were he in the flesh), but for some occult and most merciful reason the north wind does not find out that particular crack in the mountains through which Davos is vulnerable more than once

or twice in a season. There certainly is a valley wind, or rather current of air, which often asserts itself at midday in a mysterious sort of way, blowing from no one knows exactly where, and blowing itself out in a very short time no one knows exactly how. It is not precisely pleasant while it lasts, but it is just sufficient to make you thoroughly appreciate the marvellous still calm which is the leading feature and chief charm of the place. There are also periodical visitations of the mild enervating gentle *föhn* wind which, coming zephyrlike from the south, brings death and disease and all sorts of gruesome consequences in its train, if rumour may be credited. Personally speaking, we enjoyed it on the whole, and careful enquiry failed in tracing any fatal or evil effects beyond perhaps a mild fit of the 'blues' to this much-slandered visitor. The snow, which generally averages six or eight feet, and in the preceding winter attained a 'record' of thirteen feet, came down but sparingly till the new year was well advanced, barely enough for tobogganning purposes.

The town or district of Davos is divided into the two parishes of Davos Platz and Davos Dörfli, of which Platz is the grander and the more haughty, but Dörfli gets the most sun and fresh air. They are about a mile apart, and in Platz are congregated all the shops and most of the hotels, foreign and English. In fact, Platz is the resort of fashion at present, but how long it will continue to be so will depend on its ability to consume its own smoke, which at present is apt to hang over it like a pall, and naturally grows with the growth of the town. The history of that growth has often been told elsewhere. It is sufficient to say that it started in business as a health resort in 1862, and practically has never looked back. In January of this present year of grace the number of 'kurguests' (the name bestowed on visitors for some mysterious reason; at first sight it does not appear complimentary, but no offence is intended) was about 1,800, towards which total England contributed 480; Germany topped us by 160, and the balance was composed of Swiss, French, Americans, and, for aught I know to the contrary, 'the dwellers about Cyrene.' This included the Christmas visitors, of whom a goodly number came from the shores of Albion in search of sunshine and skating, and included among these were many clergymen, all good fellows, and all adepts on the ice, being worthily led in that respect by his reverence the Chaplain of Davos. Why is it, we may ask in parenthesis, that skating is the only winter sport that is not practically tabooed to our spiritual advisers? True, they may hunt

and shoot if they are sufficiently strong-minded and independent to do so, but they sadly jeopardise their reputations thereby, and run the risk of being 'talked about.' We can only surmise that, if skating lasted as long in England as it does in the Grisons, the unfortunate parson would be debarred by the voice of public opinion from taking his share even of that pastime.

The skating-rink is of ample dimensions, and flooded as occasion requires, but as yet either the means provided for flooding are inadequate, or the process, where so large an area is concerned, is imperfectly understood. Whatever may be the cause, we were not infrequently called on to struggle over hillocks and mountains of ice, varied with ruts and holes (the former caused by the water freezing in layers during the process of flooding, and the latter resulting apparently from the peculiar brittleness of the ice, which is produced by intense cold); but, on the whole, we had not much ground for complaint, and under all our criticisms there lurked the secret feeling, 'If we could only get as good a bit of ice as this in England, we should think ourselves jolly lucky.' One portion is roped off for the benefit of the Skating Club, whereon untiring aspirants twiddle round all day, in endless efforts to execute 'Threes,' 'Endless Qs,' and suchlike mystic evolutions, to their own satisfaction, sometimes varying the occupation by indulging in a combined figure which recalls irresistibly the dance at which Alice and the Mock Turtle assisted under the Gryphon's directions. At the further end of the rink another roped space is sacred to the votaries of the 'roaring game' of curling.

The alternative to skating, as regards outdoor sports, is tobogganing, for mountain climbing, which is strongly recommended by the faculty as the patient gains strength, is no longer practicable when the snow really asserts itself. An exception must be made as regards the Schatz Alp, an eminence of a thousand feet, skilfully laid out with zigzag paths and tempting seats, and carefully kept clear of snow for the invalids' benefit; but this ascent must rather be considered as partaking of the nature of 'the daily round, the common task,' than as a claimant to the dignity of an outdoor pastime.

Tobogganing is undoubtedly, to our mind, the king of sports in the Grisons. The exhilarating sensation produced by flying through this keen air at the rate of twenty-five miles an hour causes it to rank, we think (*sed longo intervallo*), next to riding across country. We may, perhaps, compare it to riding a drag with, as Mr. Jorrocks would say, 'only five per cent. of its danger.' This last estimate

applies to the greater runs of Klosters and Clavadel, which cause Davos to rank pre-eminent as the tobogganist's resort, and which are simply the high roads leading to and from those respective localities. The more ambitious sportsman, who aims at nothing less than breaking his neck, is amply catered for by the tobogganing committee, who construct yearly, for his especial behoof, with patient labour and fiendish ingenuity, the notable Buol Run, which, averaging about a quarter of a mile in length, combines a series of pitfalls and obstacles, consisting of leaps of various dimensions, bumps, and well-iced banks, ending generally with a drop into the road. A steady persistence in this run generally enables the said sportsman to attain, if not the summit of his desires, something very like it.

The two forms of toboggan in common use are the 'Swiss' and the recently introduced 'America.' Of these, the former is naturally the native machine, and is used by every man, woman, and child in the country, either for tobogganing purposes or for drawing small loads, for which it is eminently adapted, being in the form of a miniature sledge. It is also extensively patronised by the steady-going portion of the English community, who prefer ease and safety to pace, discomfort, and possible peril.

The Swiss is ridden in a sitting posture—legs straight out in front of you, the only appliances required being a peg in each hand with a spike in the end, for the purpose of propulsion in case the snow be soft and the run consequently slow, or a screw (this varies according to taste) to facilitate steerage in case of an awkward turn in the road. The 'America,' which, in its most advanced form, the 'Spider' or 'Skeleton,' recently introduced from St. Moritz, simply consists of a plank laid on spring runners, is ridden head foremost. One leg is kept out behind, the foot armed with a formidable iron rake, to act both as propeller or brake as occasion demands. A certain amount of wriggling of the body is required, apparently, for the purpose of speed, which does not add to the elegance of the performance. In fact, the position reminds one irresistibly of the doom pronounced on the serpent: 'On thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat;' and the spectacle presented in racing by these worms wriggling down a hill in Indian file is unique, to say the least of it. However, there is no doubt that they 'have the legs' of the old-fashioned Swiss, and as pace is everything nowadays, there is equally no doubt that they will supplant the latter (even the native children are riding head foremost now, and they are the arbiters of the future

destinies of the world), and before long we shall be treated to the spectacle of men and women (*quod Di prohibeant*) alike rushing headlong down the snow slopes.

There is a mode of riding head first in a sitting position with one leg tucked underneath the body which is exceedingly graceful in effect, and may be said to very nearly approximate to the poetry of motion. The chief exponents of this art are two Dutch brethren, and grand fellows they are; but it is by no means an art easy of acquirement, and the great majority, blind to all sense of the picturesque, are content to grovel.

The run to Klosters on a fairly 'fast' day, whether on 'Swiss' or 'America,' is certainly worth living for. A convenient train conveys you in twelve minutes to Wolfgang, the starting-point. Taking your seat on your toboggan, you commence with a gradual descent, the pace increasing until a short run of lightning speed round two queerish corners brings you to the village of l'Arete, rather over a mile from the start. Here a walk of a few hundred yards is generally inevitable, but as the scenery all the way down is very grand—snow mountains towering above you while, at the foot of the precipices beneath, a brawling glacier stream foams and rushes, and by its very velocity bids for a long time defiance to the all-conquering frost—you do not find the walk at all tedious, and after passing through a pine forest you come to the race-course, where the international contests are decided. This is the cream of the run, nearly two miles in length, and with the ground in your favour you may hope to accomplish it in seven minutes on a 'Swiss,' in a minute or so less on an 'America.' To describe the delights of this run is a task entirely beyond the powers of our prosaic pen. The fresh beauties of scenery disclosed by each turn of the road; the great Silvretta glacier gleaming far above on the right; now gliding in and out of a clump of pines; now crossing a mountain torrent; here shivering as you skim along the edge of a precipice; there exulting as you get round an awkward bend without running into the snowdrift which ever besets your path, and, finally, the view of the village of Klosters nestling far below at one moment, and the next brought within measurable distance as you spin round the last two fatal corners. However cautious you may be at starting, by this time you have thrown all cares to the wind, which whistles past you, and if you are a novice it is 'a thousand to nothing' that you come to hopeless grief at one or other of them. However, as this involves nothing worse than a plunge into soft snow, there is no harm done, and you have

the option either of joining the band of enthusiasts who plod up again for another run down, dragging their machines after them, and giving the ordinary bystander the impression that they are trying to qualify for a Bath chairman's berth; or of taking your seat in the train which will eventually, after an hour's journey, land you once more in Davos. The trains are most convenient, and it is possible to go down after breakfast and come back to lunch; to go after lunch and return for tea, or to enjoy a moonlight run, which, in the opinion of some connoisseurs, beats all else; the mysterious sensation of flying alone through the still air, through the pitch-dark vistas of firs, and out again into the glorious moonlight and sparkling snow, constituting, to their minds, the very apex of human existence. These enthusiasts place Klosters and 'fair Melrose' in the same category; these, also, the never-failing train conveys home by 9.30 P.M.

The run from Clavadel is very good when Klosters is not available. It is rather more than a mile in length and beautifully wooded throughout. We shall never forget our first experience there, when during our toilsome ascent (there is no train handy here) we heard the tinkle of a little bell, and presently two tiny red-capped native children on one toboggan came shooting out of the forest towards us. The Norse tales, in which our childhood delighted, flashed back on us at the sight of those elves, and for the first time in our life we were able to comprehend the *raison d'être* of that marvellous richness of imagination and belief in the supernatural which seem to be the constant characteristics of the dwellers in the pine forests.

Clavadel lies three good miles from Davos, and you finally leave the town at the spot where the hospital stands cheek by jowl with the cemetery, an economical but not altogether a cheery arrangement. The usual mode of proceeding to Clavadel and other resorts of the tobogganist is by 'tailing,' which being, so far as we know, an institution peculiar to Davos, may merit description.

When the late Laureate, in 'Locksley Hall,' mentioned 'the trailers swinging from the crag,' he must undoubtedly have had a tailing party in view. It is composed of a sleigh of large or small dimensions, drawn by one, two, or four horses, to which are fastened a number of toboggans according to taste. They are attached behind in pairs, and vary from one or two to between twenty and thirty. A small tailing party—say up to six toboggans—is by no means unpleasant, but the individual who would of free

will take part in many large parties of this description deserves to be framed and glazed and handed down to posterity. The long tail sways about much as does the tail of a kite; at every bend or corner there is a very good chance of an upset for somebody, especially for those at the far end, where the oscillation is apt to be most violent, and if you do upset without becoming entangled in your toboggan, and in consequence dragged for sundry yards before the driver discovers your mishap, you may be accounted lucky.

The science of tobogganing is still in its infancy. In all questions connected with it the rule of thumb still predominates. A considerable number of persons seem to have devoted years of their life to a patient study of the art, and yet to have arrived at little or no conclusion. There is no rule whereby you can determine, on the view, the goodness or badness of any specific toboggan. You can only decide by means of actual trial. Again, experts are entirely at variance as to the occasions on which a light machine is superior to a heavy one, and *vice versâ*. The respective parts played in the performance by weight, balance, and nerve are as yet unallotted, though undoubtedly, on the steeple-chasing runs, nerve counts for a good deal. On the whole, we are disposed to think that balance and a knowledge how to distribute your weight evenly (an unconscious knowledge, for we never met anyone who could explain the method) are the most vital points. As to weight, light and heavy people seem to go equally well, but probably, where two people are evenly matched, and are both experts, the heavier would get the pull.

The course on the high-road 'runs,' as the toboggan handicappers can testify, seldom seems alike for two consecutive days, and varies in pace continually in sympathy with the temperature of the air, and in proportion as the general traffic along the roads is heavy or otherwise. The artificial courses, which are carefully watered daily, as occasion requires, are simply a sheet of ice, and do not vary so much as the snow runs in point of pace. On these a brake is of absolute necessity, and woe be to the unlucky wight who tries to dispense with it! The science of the application of the brake is perhaps the only royal road to proficiency on an ice run.

The development of this ancient practice into what may be termed a national sport is largely due to the exertions of the late Mr. John Addington Symonds, whose premature death this spring was deeply deplored in all lands where the English tongue is

spoken, and has left a gap in the Grisons which will not easily be filled. This gentleman, with a view to bringing about a friendly rivalry between natives and visitors, instituted international toboggan races, and presented a challenge cup, which was supplemented in later years by a challenge shield, the former restricted to strictly Swiss toboggans, ridden in the orthodox manner, the latter open to every class of machine, and allowing of any position which may commend itself to the ingenuity of the propeller.

The native *chiffonnier*, who explores the Klosters road after the thaw at the end of the season, must frequently be rewarded by a rare 'find,' inasmuch as a spill usually necessitates a scattering of the contents of pockets, small change and other articles of value finding as lasting a winding-sheet as the soldier did in the poem. A curious case of treasure retrieved occurred last winter. A competitor in one of the races, while proceeding at full speed, caught a view of a watch lying on the snow bank at the side of the road. On arriving at the finish he gave information which led to its recovery, and it proved to be the property of a lady who had lost it three weeks previously. Without doubt it had lain comfortably in the drift until it was turned up by the snow-plough, when the course was being prepared for the race in question.

A German kurguest, who prided himself on his thorough knowledge of English, once remarked that 'We are come here for the shedding of blood.' In spite of the sinister aspect of this formidable dictum, which has become a 'household word' in Davos, there is a kindly feeling pervading the English society in this valley which is little short of astonishing, when it is considered that we are shut up here for six months without anything whatever to do. There are, of course, a certain amount of petty bickerings in the hotels as the winter progresses, but in respect of these a laudable *esprit de corps* prevails, and a determination to 'wash the dirty linen at home,' and the public peace is not disturbed. There is, no doubt, plenty of gossip—that is inevitable—but it is not of the ill-natured type, and the lurid light of a scandal never seems to cast its baleful glare on this peaceful community. As for the political and religious feuds and squabbles, which seem, in the eyes of many, to be the only things which make life worth living in the provincial towns at home, they are simply conspicuous at Davos by their non-existence. Considering how many 'idle hands' there are about, this secluded little nook must have been hitherto overlooked by the arch-enemy. Each

hotel has its 'Amusement Fund,' raised by subscriptions among its guests; and this fund is administered by a committee which selects the form of entertainment, and issues its invitations in the most hospitable manner. Balls, concerts, and teas form the chief staple of these amusements, and they have the particular merit of finishing at a reasonable hour. Except on very rare occasions, one can always make sure of getting to bed soon after 10 P.M., having drunk the cup of pleasure to the dregs.

In addition to these amusements must be reckoned the many picnics to Klosters, Clavadel, and Monstein, all which resorts are largely patronised by the tailing parties aforesaid. These are the great opportunities for the amateur photographer, whose name is legion here, and whose records are scattered broadcast over the face of the earth in the form of innumerable essays, successful or otherwise (especially otherwise), from Kodak, Eclipse, and every description of camera, new and old. The novelty of an al-fresco meal, with seven or eight feet of snow covering the ground, and the rays of an almost tropical sun pouring down from above, while a magnificent panorama of snow peaks delights the eye on every side, is quite sufficient to reconcile one to what is undoubtedly a relic of barbarism. Just as the instinct of catching his prey survives in man, so does the love of devouring that prey in the open continue to distinguish woman, even in this age of refinement and extra civilisation.

But although the delights of Davos are chiefly of a physical nature, and this of necessity inasmuch as an out-of-door life is, so to speak, 'of the essence of the contract,' still the intellect finds employment, and is especially catered for by the Davos Literary Society, which meets fortnightly for the purpose of reading papers on abstruse topics or for the discussion of burning questions. Current politics and theology are strictly tabooed, lest the peace of this abnormally Happy Valley should be rudely disturbed. It cannot be denied that the withdrawal of the former class of subjects leads to a certain tameness in the debates, which are apt to be of a slightly moribund nature. For those, and I fear they are in the majority, who prefer a more stimulating form of intellectual exercise, the drama offers abundant satisfaction, there being no lack of aspirants to the honours of the foot-lights. The reading section of the public are amply provided with an excellent English library, the shelves of which are annually recruited by donations; while for those who covet literary fame,

the columns of the *Davos Courier* are open weekly throughout the season.

St. Moritz, which is about a day's journey from Davos, is reached by sleigh (in theory the most delightful, in practice the most infernal, mode of conveyance), and two passes, the Julier and the Fluela, are available throughout the winter, whereof the latter most commends itself to the more sporting section of the community in consequence of the frequency of the avalanches, the immeasurably greater possibilities of an upset, and the ever-present likelihood of being snowed up *en route*. The journey is worth accomplishing, if only for the sake of inspecting the Cresta run, which, although it does not pretend to compete with that of Klosters in point of length, nevertheless, for sublimity of conception, audacity of execution, and, generally, from the breakneck point of view, far overtops anything that Davos has yet produced.

The mode of cure adopted as a rule by the English and foreign doctors at Davos differs considerably, inasmuch as while the Englishman is, as a rule, allowed to lead an active existence, the Teuton spends his winter lying flat on his back in the open air from morn till dewy eve, ay, and far on into the night, piled up with rugs, and only stirring from his downy nest at feeding hours, which recur three or four times a day. The voracity with which he consumes his meals is sufficient evidence of the appetising powers conferred by the outer air, but at the same time conveys the disquieting thought that his lungs are being cured at the expense of his liver. He is spared, however, the temptation to overdo it in point of exercise, which is the 'rock ahead' against which the Briton has to be on his guard.

A charitable society exists here, supported alike by English and foreigners, for the relief and maintenance of such invalids as are unable to bear the expense of the lengthened stay which is usually necessary. The absolutely destitute are not considered proper objects of relief, and it is a moot point, in respect of which the most experienced opinions seem decidedly to be ranked on the negative side, whether the very poor derive any greater benefit from Davos than they would from Ventnor. There can be no doubt that they do not take kindly as a rule to foreign cookery and foreign manners and customs, and they have further a sense of isolation from their 'pals' which gives them a tendency to mope, and thereby retards their progress. It has also been sug-

gested, and not unreasonably, that the change which Ventnor offers to the artisan in point of air and diet is as great and, therefore, as beneficial as that which Davos can give to those who are accustomed to better air and food, and, of course, a saving is effected of the heavy expenses entailed by the long railway journey and the extra clothing which the rigours of an Alpine winter necessitate.

Whatever may be the truth about the so-called 'working-classes,' there is no doubt that the black-coated poor, governesses, clerks in offices, and all who are accustomed to greater comforts than the very poor enjoy, may expect to derive great and lasting benefit from a visit to Davos, provided, of course, that they go before the disease has acquired a firm hold of their system. The rule of the society is that a case should be self-supporting for three months, which means an outlay of at the very least 450 francs for maintenance, in addition to railway and other expenses, before they will grant relief; and in any case it would be as well for the applicant to come provided with a certificate from some leading London physician to the effect that in his opinion a winter at Davos would restore the invalid to perfect health.

Nothing, it is certain, humanly speaking, will arrest the progress of this health resort, unless it be the overcrowding before alluded to or the invention of a new cure. The Davos natives have already had a scare on the latter point, and when you see one of the hotel proprietors pacing moodily along some sunny morning, looking as if life had no further charm for him, you may lay your last pair of boots that he supped off cold pork last night and has been dreaming of Dr. Koch. We have no manner of doubt that that is the name which the Davoser mother uses to terrify her unruly child, and that the worthy doctor is the general bugbear and nightmare of all who live and thrive out of the visitors to this favoured spot. If this scheme, or anything of a like nature, is ever perfected, it will be a case of Ichabod with Davos. Meanwhile, *faites le jeu, messieurs*, though I am bound to state that the stakes are by no means high as yet. In fact, it is as cheap a place of residence for visitors as one could hope to find in any quarter of the globe. The native is much too well off and independent to be rapacious.

At length the winter shows signs of waning. Constant mid-day thaws necessitate the closing of the rink in the early days of March; tobogganing is only practicable in early morning and

after sundown; there are hard frosts nightly, but the ever-increasing power of the sun warns invalids and robust alike to be moving before the roads are broken up and the accumulated litter and refuse of the winter unfreeze; the snow (now reduced to an unimportant layer of three feet or so) is swept from the lawn-tennis court, and tournaments become the order of the day. And so the time passes not unpleasantly even up to the last in the Valley of the Shadow of Death.

C. W. KENNEDY.

At the Sign of the Ship.

‘MY days among the dead are past,’ like the late Mr. Southey’s. I know not how or why it is, but phantoms, ghosts, wraiths, seem to accumulate and mark me for their own. For example, if any reader of this page chances to know any book in which the following story is printed, he will much oblige me by imparting the information. For the truth of the tale I do not vouch; I have it at second hand, while all who can possibly have seen the ghost of the narrative are ghosts themselves. The source of the legend is a Russian gentleman of French extraction, M. de Ribeaupierre. He told the tale to a lady of my acquaintance, who met him at the Russian Court many years ago. M. de Ribeaupierre, in his youth, was a page of her late Imperial Majesty Catherine the Great, and was much attached to his august mistress. The Empress died in 1797. Now, either in her palace, or in another large house which had been occasionally used as a palace, and possessed a dais and throne-room (for here my informants differ), the phantasm of the dead Czarina, in full imperial costume, was wont to appear visibly, so that everyone present saw it, and, among others, M. de Ribeaupierre was wont to regard it with even more affection than awe. But the Empress’s son and successor, the Czar Paul, did not at all enjoy the spectacle of departed majesty, which, perhaps, is only natural; yet his conduct struck M. de Ribeaupierre as highly unnatural and offensive. The Czar, provoked by the pertinacity of the phantom, brought a company of his Guards into the hall and ordered them to fire on the appearance. ‘A soldier only has his orders.’ They did fire, and the apparition returned no more. This is obviously a story rather picturesque than convincing, but my desire is to learn whether it occurs in any book of memoirs on Court gossip, or whether we are here printing for the first time such a curious legend. M. de Ribeaupierre must have been about eighty years of age when he told the tale to my informant.

The following story is less well vouched for, and I am not sure that my informant had it at first hand, or whether it was only part of Russian court gossip. When Home the 'Medium' was in Russia (I think the date is about 1857-1862) he was holding a *séance* in presence of the Emperor and a few members of his suite. There chanced to be an empty chair among those round the table. A deep silence fell on the company, with an impression of the supernatural. Home, looking at the empty chair, said to the Czar, 'Your Majesty's father?' The Czar nodded in assent. Nobody else saw any figure in the chair, and the subject was dropped. These two are very distinguished spectres, or agreeably striking examples of what

Muscovia mendax

Audet in historia.

If the second tale is true as far as it goes, one may conjecture that the Czar was hypnotised by the adroit American thaumaturge.

* * *

Some months ago, in editing an old Scotch book of *diablerie*, I said that, among stories reported to myself at first hand, the cases in which a seeming apparition did *not* coincide with any death, or other striking circumstance, were far more numerous than those in which the phantasm had, as it were, an excuse for appearing. This was certainly my impression at the time of writing, but I have since made up a little census of the ghostly legends narrated to me at first hand, and the proportions between orthodox spectres and mere empty, uncalled-for hallucinations turn out to be the reverse of what I had supposed. The more substantial or more interesting 'bogle' has the better of the statistics.

Yet, though Fellows of the Royal Society and professors have taken up the subject of ghosts with admirable seriousness, there is one kind of ghost to which they do scanty justice. This is the aimless apparition of a living person. As far as psychological science has come to any affirmative conclusion about spectres, the conclusion is that one mind somehow acts upon another mind, so that the mind acted upon projects an hallucination resembling the personal appearance of the agent. As in many anecdotes these hallucinations coincide with some crisis in the agent's career—he is dying, or in danger, or is late for dinner, or has missed a train—it is conjectured that these experiences beget a 'psychical' condition, in which the 'agent' can produce the hallucination in the 'percipient.' But as it is admitted that

a sane person may be hallucinated, may be *enphantosmé*, as the Old French has it, when there is no coincidence between the apparition and any crisis in the affairs of the owner of the apparition, the question arises, Are the hallucinations called 'veridical' or 'coincidental' numerous enough to require any explanation beyond that of chance coincidence? Let us suppose that a thousand sane people have an hallucination representing a living person in the course of a year. How many of these delusions coincide with the death, or illness, or danger, or even excitement, of the person whose appearance seems to be witnessed? Attempts have been made to collect statistics, and some inquirers have decided that the proportion of 'coincidental' hallucinations of veridical 'wraiths' or 'fetches' is too great to be explained by accident. If this view is correct, it will follow that, under certain circumstances of stress, one mind can influence and 'enphantasm' another mind. The extreme Left of the psychical party even believe that the minds of the dead can do this; but that is a question with which we are not concerned here, as we do not know what events may be occurring to a dead agent, and therefore no coincidence can be traced.

* * *

The psychical statisticians, with a great array of mathematical formulæ, have tried to show that chance will not account for the apparitions of the living or dying, that there is more in them than fortuitous occurrence. But though the statisticians may have collected the negative instances honestly and arrayed their figures correctly, they do not publish the *details* of anecdotes in which the phantasm is aimless. The printed tales are all coincidental: the aimless appearances are mere ciphers; hence they do not strike the imagination of the student, and they fail to be appreciated at their proper value. It may, therefore, be worth while to give the first-hand stories of hallucinations in the sane which have come under the notice of the casual amateur. The facts, or fancies, have no statistical value, but they naturally affect the amateur's own opinions and behaviour.

Let us take, first, the cases in which people were enphantasmed to some purpose.

* * *

The amateur has met at first hand—

Friends who have seen, but not recognised, ghost in haunted house, 3.

Friend who has seen a phantasm of a person who had been dead for a fortnight, 1.

Acquaintances who have seen, recognised, and followed a phantasm in a haunted house, 2.

Friend who has heard and felt but not *seen* ditto, he not being aware of the hauntings, 1.

Friend who has seen, in company with another person (who thought it was 'the horrors'), a common churchyard ghost, 1.

Friend who saw death-bed wraith, 1.

Distant cousin who saw an apparition at the moment of its owner's death at a great distance, 1.

Personal experience of a death-bed wraith, 1. (This is dubious.)

These eleven are all hallucinations at first hand, and all (if genuine) were respectable instances of phantasms with some excuse for appearing. Of the seers, two at least were more or less 'sensitives,' and one is very short-sighted.

On the other side of the account the amateur reckons—

Personal experience of seeing and speaking to an hallucination, 1.

Friend who met and held out his hand to an hallucination in the open air, said hallucination then vanishing (both were persons of eminence), 1.

Friends who saw and spoke to hallucinations of persons not present, but in another room of the same house, 2.

Friend whose mother wrote to say that he had entered her room, when he was perfectly well, and probably playing cricket, at a distance, 1.

'Borderland case: '—

Friend sees and converses, while in bed, with deceased relation, who predicts friend's death (friend does *not* die), 1.

Acquaintance sees a third person, who is not really present, in company with two other embodied friends (nothing happens to owner of apparition), 1.

Friend sees two companions, not really present, who, at the moment, have been upset out of a boat, and lost their hats (the appearances are damp and hatless), 1.

* * *

Here are eight first-hand cases of aimless hallucinations, but perhaps the last, as there was a kind of coincidence, should be reckoned in the former list. If so, we have—

Interesting hallucinations, 12.

Aimless and non-veridical hallucinations, 7.

Taking the case of presentiments or premonitions, the amateur has at first hand :—

High-class banshie, 1.

Veridical presentiments, acted on, 2.

Non-veridical, but acted on, 1.

This makes the veridical or coincidental cases fifteen ; the aimless cases, eight.

We omit a case in which an acquaintance saw and conversed with a dead friend. *He* was overheard speaking by persons in the next room ; the remarks of the phantasm, however, were inaudible. This case, therefore, is difficult to class with scientific exactitude.

On these personal statistics, the chances of a real spectre, wraith, banshie, or ghost, against an aimless hallucination, are fifteen to eight, or nearly two to one. Discounting the churchyard ghost and a dubious death-bed wraith, the odds are still thirteen to eight on an orthodox bogie of some sort. How far the aimless should discredit, as merely fortuitous, the more striking examples, is a question for the student of public form, so to speak. In any such calculation it must, of course, be remembered that people may either forget or work up and add artistic merit to contradictory instances, to aimless hallucinations, which thus have but a poor chance of being estimated at their true value. On the other hand, the ghost has many enemies. Many people delight, and very justifiably, in a contradictory instance. Once more, it may be said by friends of the ghost, we know nothing of psychical conditions. A phantasm apparently aimless *may* be caused by some obscure motives of the unconscious self. But this is hardly the kind of argument on which a judicious advocate will lay stress. The sceptic may certainly insist that aimless phantasms should have a fair show, and be reported with details as full as if they were ' veridical.'

* * *

Among my more or less striking apparitions, I have omitted perhaps the most curious of all. For various reasons this spectre's history need not be given here. Suffice it to say that he was in ancient Highland costume, and was distinctly seen by two different persons on the same day, indeed at an interval of ten minutes, in the same place—a very remarkable place, with a remarkable tradition. But the person who saw him first, with another, was

present when the second 'percipient' beheld the thing, and then neither the first seer nor the friend who had joined him saw anything out of the common. The light was that of a brilliant noon-day. Now here the psychical philosopher will allege that the first seer had a chance hallucination, which he 'telepathically' (and unconsciously) transferred to the second seer, but not to the third person. Nobody present was acquainted with the legend of the place, which we only heard of on the following day. On the whole the 'telepathic' explanation seems rather less difficult to swallow than the ghost. But then how odd that the chance hallucination coincided with the story preserved by tradition! It is only fair to add that the said tradition is current in other districts as well as in that where the little adventure happened. A much more potent spirit was he who did for the Rev. Mr. Thomson, the father of James Thomson the poet, the author of *The Castle of Indolence*. In Mr. James Thomson's Life, prefixed to the Perth edition of *The Seasons* (1793), we are merely told that Thomson père 'died suddenly.' He did, indeed. But the Perth biographer does not mention that the Rev. Mr. Thomson died suddenly—while exorcising a ghost! That is the fact, however, and it is a warning to psychical researchers. The details of this melancholy event are at present unknown to me, but if they are chronicled in the registers of Ednam Parish I hope to recover them and to place them in a proper light.

* * *

Our Whig ancestors, if we were so unfortunate as to have Whig ancestors, were queer people in 1793. I lately came across a tiny quarto of 1794, containing the poems of Mr. J. Courtenay. This gentleman was in an engineer corps, and died in Calcutta at the early age of nineteen, in consequence of drinking a glass of lemonade after a dance. He survived only a few minutes after imbibing the fatal potion, and, in spite of Lady Henry Somerset, I cannot but wish that he had preferred brandy pawnee. His portrait, engraved after Tonelli, represents a young man of wonderful good looks. The news of his decease was broken to his father by Mr. Fox himself, for the Courtenays were Whigs. The bereaved parent, himself the translator of Tyrtæus (he dedicated the Dorian bard to the officers of the Highland regiments), published young Mr. Courtenay's poems. In these he hails the benignant dawn of that pleasing popular movement, the French Revolution, especially dwelling on the social career of festivity now open to

emancipated nuns, and congratulating mankind on the felicity of life devoid of kings, nobles, and bishops. But Mr. Courtenay's most singular piece is a 'College Exercise' on Moses and the Burning Bush, *nec tamen consumebatur*. Mr. Courtenay treats this topic in the Voltairean manner. He assumes that the Hebrew legislator was beguiled by boys, who had placed a candle in a hollowed turnip. That fruit, perhaps, was not indigenous to the Desert, nor commonly grown on Mount Horeb, about the period of Meneptah. The poem can hardly have been welcomed by Cambridge dons as a 'College Exercise'; probably it was a merely facetious entertainment, like Thackeray's 'Timbuctoo.' But in spite of the advance of thought, one presumes that this boyish blasphemy would no longer be popular at Cambridge, still less would it be published by a bereaved father. They were very advanced, the Whigs of 1792, but not according to knowledge, or in accordance with good taste. And very much it would have depressed these emancipated souls to know that a century later this kind of fun would excite astonishment, but would be far from arousing sympathy in cultivated bosoms. We shall never know how Voltairean our ancestors were. For, behold, this also is played out! But Mr. Courtenay was too young to know any better, and his remarkable good looks make those who have seen his portrait ready to pardon a good deal of folly. Old Tyrtæus, his father is less easily understood.

* * *

An historical writer, Mr. James Payn, has recently startled me by a monograph entitled 'Was Charles I. hung in chains?' Cromwell's dead body, we know, was disinterred, hung up, beheaded, and the head was set on a pole. *C'est très bien!* But Mr. Payn quotes from Mr. Barkstead, son of the regicide, the statement that Cromwell was secretly buried on Naseby field. So Cromwell's body was not hung in chains. Then whose was? Somebody, in the *Harleian Miscellany*, says that somebody else's father declared that Cromwell's friends had removed the corpse of Charles I. from Windsor and interred it in the tomb supposed to be the Protector's. Consequently, the dead king was the person hanged in chains. A horror-struck public beheld the royal martyr, whose head had been stitched on to the neck! Clarendon admits that Charles's body could not be found after the Reformation. But in 1814 the coffin of Charles I., at Windsor, was opened and examined. Mr. Payn suggests that the king's corpse

was placed there *after* the hanging in chains, after the mistake was discovered. May I point out to Mr. Payn that Mr. Pepys, on October 13, 1664, quotes Sorbière's 'French book' for a legend that Cromwell transposed many royal bodies, 'and by that means it is not known certainly whether the head that is now set up on a pole be that of Cromwell or of one of the kings.' But Mr. White, Cromwell's chaplain, assured Mr. Pepys that 'he believes Cromwell never had so poor and low a thought in him to trouble himself about it.' The great Protector did not war with the dead. Finally, I am told that Cromwell's head, the very head set on the pole, is now preserved in a country house in Kent, and, after all its adventures, is still recognisable. But it certainly does not seem to have been recognisable when it was on the pole. Mr. Payn's essay appears in his *Sunny Stories, and Some Shady Ones*, p. 183.¹

* * *

THE NIGHTINGALE'S SONG.

The eve was calm and still,
The woods were hush'd to rest,
The moon behind the hill
Gleamed on the silver west.
Over the drowsy earth,
Under the moonbeams pale,
A mystic song had birth
In the heart of the nightingale.

Like a bard inspired she sang
Of love and the heart's unrest,
Like a morning carol rang
The thoughts of her joyous breast.
While the dew on her nest was bright,
And the bright stars burned above,
She sang to the infant night
Of the golden dawn of Love.

And I said to my beating heart,
'Be still!' for the minstrel bird
Had torn its wound apart,
And its gushing fountain stirr'd.

¹ Chatto & Windus, London. 1893.

AT THE SIGN OF THE SHIP.

'Ah, Love, Love, Love!' I cried,
 Under the moonbeams pale,
 When that mystic music died
 In the throat of the nightingale!

TOM WATKINS.

* * *

A facetious writer in that witty periodical, *The Speaker*, announces that he reads, in 'Literary Gossip,' a recurring statement about a new *Life of Walton*, by myself. Perhaps I do not study 'Literary Gossip,' certainly I have seen no such tattle, since a life of Walton was contemplated by me, and given up, five or six years ago. The statements which vex the gentleman in *The Speaker*, if they are not hallucinations of his own, are inventions of some other journalist over whose imagination I have, naturally, no control.

* * *

Readers of LONGMAN'S MAGAZINE may remember verses signed Frances Wynne, which have occasionally appeared in this department. They will learn with regret that the accomplished author of these and other graceful pieces, published in a volume named *Whisper!* has recently died, while still very young. (*Whisper!* Paul, Trench, & Trübner. 1890.) Mrs. Wynne was a contributor to the *Spectator* and, I believe, to other periodicals. Her verse was melodious, natural, gay, and much inspired by love of nature, of flowers, and of children. She was only beginning her career in letters—a career so early and so sadly closed.

A. LANG.

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